



THE INDEPENDENT

N° 3397

TUESDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 1997

WEATHER: Mostly fine

(R45p) 40p

IN THE TABLOID

CAROL SHIELDS
THREE DAYS THAT
CHANGED MY LIFE



IN THE TABLOID

THE BATTLE
OF THE
SHRINKS



SPORT PAGE 24

Independent
Fantasy Football
THE FIRST MONTH'S RESULTS

Blair stirs up Home Rule vote

Stephen Goodwin

Tony Blair yesterday tried to work his personal magic on a jittery campaign for Scottish home rule, telling voters they had "nothing to be frightened of, except fear itself".

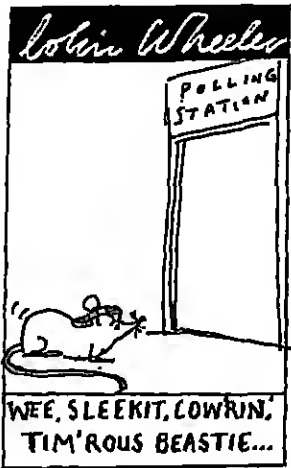
The Prime Minister's problem, however, is that many Scots are not so much afraid of devolution as apathetic towards it. Behind Mr Blair's election-style campaigning lies an unease in the Labour high command and among their home-rule allies that the turnout could be low and the outcome a messy, unconvincing mandate for a parliament in Edinburgh.

In a series of speeches and walkabouts in the central belt, the Prime Minister urged Scots to have confidence in their ability to govern themselves and to reject scares over giving the new Parliament tax-raising powers.

"The idea that this is a power with which the Scottish people can't be trusted, I just find that wrong, absurd even," Mr Blair said during an hour-long question and answer session at Trinity Academy, an Edinburgh comprehensive school.

He presented the Parliament as the mature next step to the "bureaucratic devolution" to the Scottish Office of responsibility for services including health, education, local government and the environment.

However, of 17 questions put to Mr Blair at the Academy by an invited audience of predominantly middle-class adults and senior pupils - the kind of intelligent audience most likely to be concerned about issues of democracy - only four were about home rule. Student fees, education



generally, and housing were more pressing concerns.

The disturbing irony for the ministers, who have descended in force on Scotland this week, is that they are calling for a double "Yes" vote at a time when the clamour for home rule is at its lowest for 13 years.

Mr Blair was applauded on the streets yesterday with a warmth that would never have been extended to John Major or Baroness Thatcher, hated by Scots for using them as poll tax guinea pigs. Privately, senior Labour figures in Scotland wonder why, having won real power at last, they should devote it to what would most likely be a Parliament led by coalition.

Labour's fear of a low turnout became evident last week, when officials emphasised that "real" electorate for Thursday's vote was about 3.5m rather than the 3.97m on the official register. Some 400,000 people are assumed to have moved or died since the list was drawn up last October.

Jitters about the outcome also appeared to be behind a suggestion by Jim Wallace, leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats, that his Orkney and Shetland constituents should be given a degree of autonomy from a Scottish Parliament. The islands emphatically rejected devolution in the 1979 referendum and Mr Wallace's proposal was seized on by "No" campaigners as an admission that they will do so again.

With William Hague, the Tory leader, due to bang the anti-home rule drum today, the hitherto barely evident "Think Twice" campaign claims to be gaining ground. Opinion polls indicate a comfortable majority in favour of a Scottish Parliament, but Brian Monteth, the Think Twice organiser, believes Scots will deny it any tax-raising powers. An ICM poll on Sunday showed that just 45 per cent of voters support the power to raise taxes by up to 3p in the pound, while 38 per cent were against - the lowest margin yet.

Lord Fraser, Director of Think Twice and the former Lord Advocate, said Mr Blair's promises of no tax rises were "empty rhetoric" that could not be delivered. "What Mr Blair can deliver is the highway to independence as an Edinburgh Parliament becomes the focal point for all the dissent and rancour that a mid-term Labour government faces."

Tam Dalyell, Labour's lone voice against home rule - or at least the only one raised in public, said: "As Mr Blair found out today, people's grievances are about money for things like schools and shortening hospital waiting lists, not about how we are governed."



Earl Spencer examines floral tributes to his sister Diana, Princess of Wales. They have been spread by her grave on the island in Althorp Park, where he invited the Press Association photographer David Jones to take pictures

Spencer thanks public for their sympathy

Louise Jury

Earl Spencer yesterday invited a lone Press Association photographer to record the sea of flowers that has overwhelmed the tiny island where his sister is buried, and then issued a statement thanking the thousands of people who have sent their sympathies. Mountains of blooms left by mourners at the gates of Althorp House, Northamptonshire, had been taken by boat to bedeck the final resting place of Diana, Princess of Wales.

"The flowers, the letters, the telegrams - all in their tens of thousands - have been a source of comfort and pride to us, and have genuinely helped us to mourn her death," Lord Spencer said. "The knowledge that Diana's life gave so many people so much can now be balanced by the hope that, in death her legacy will be immortal."

A family aide added the flowers would be left on the island. "It's ashes to ashes. They will stay here and help more flowers to grow one day around the grave."

As trailerloads of tributes were rowed across the lake to the unmarked grave, it emerged that the Royal family offered to restore the title Her Royal Highness within hours of the scathing funeral address by her brother, Lord Spencer. The Spencer family dismissed the gesture because it was not what the Princess would have wanted.

The decision by Buckingham Palace to release details followed calls by some newspapers for the HRH style to be given back. A Palace spokesman said it had consulted the Spencer family on Saturday afternoon. "Their very firm view was that the Princess herself would not have wished for any change to the style and title by which she was known at the time of her death. The Spencer family itself also did not wish for it to be changed."

Diana had "voluntarily relinquished" the title when the divorce was made absolute in August 1996, the spokesman said. The Queen subsequently issued new rules on royal titles which meant that, in future, divorced wives of male descendants of the sovereign would not be entitled to use the Royal Highness style. It is understood that Sir Robert Fellowes, the Queen's private secretary, who is married to Lord Spencer's sister Jane, made the approach on the Royal Train to the Althorp burial.

Ministers may force all home owners to insure mortgages

Nic Cicutti

The Government is examining proposals to reduce even further benefits to cover mortgage interest payments of home owners who fall ill or become unemployed.

The plans, part of the review of public expenditure, potentially extend the non-benefit period from nine months for new borrowers to 18 months, and might be linked to a compulsory insurance scheme for all new borrowers. The insurance cover would cost about £7 a month for a typical £50,000 loan and would replace the benefits currently paid.

In 1996, the total spent on mortgage interest as part of income support payments was about £760m. While this amount is expected to fall in the

longer term as more people are excluded from benefits in the first nine months because they took home loans after October 1995, the cost could soar again in the event of a renewed rise in unemployment.

Compulsory home loan insurance, though not linked to a cut in mortgage interest payments, forms part of a series of proposals put forward in a report by the Council of Mortgage Lenders (CML) yesterday.

A spokesman from the Department of Social Security, said yesterday that although ministers had not yet seen the report, a number of options were now being considered by the public spending review, including this one.

The CML report argues that, taken with a series of other reforms of the welfare system

affecting homeowners, compulsory cover would help to reduce the number of home repossessions, which currently stand at about 30,000 a year.

The state's financial burden, incurred when it has to re-house evicted homeowners and pay their rents, might be further eased if it were prepared to offer support for low income homeowners at a cost of £300m a year, the CML study estimates.

Michael Coogan, director general at the CML, said: "The DSS and the Department of the Environment and Transport are carrying out a spending review and they are looking at how assistance in the housing market is paid. What we are trying to do is add to the informed debate within the Government. I think [ministers] are interested

in these sorts of views. They do not want to add to the financial burdens of borrowers."

The report, written by Steve Wilcox, an academic at the University of York, and Holly Sutherland, from Cambridge University, will be unveiled at a one-day forum to be addressed by Hilary Armstrong, the housing minister.

The two writers argue that structural changes in the housing market mean that more borrowers than ever before operate in a climate of job uncertainty. In the event of a new economic downturn, the scale of repossessions which has dropped below its peak of 60,000 a year in the early 1990s would begin to climb again.

Mr Wilcox and Ms Sutherland propose a combination of three policies to prevent the

problem faced earlier this decade from recurring. The first would involve lender flexibility and a commitment not to repossess properties if mortgage debts rise in the first three or four months after borrowers lose their jobs.

Second, the authors suggest that while tax relief on cover might make insurance more popular, this move alone is unlikely to stimulate many people to take out insurance. They suggest compulsion is the best option, because it would allow lenders to provide it more cheaply, without "adverse selection" from people who expect to be made redundant before they take the insurance out.

The third proposal involves offering borrowers similar benefits as are made available to tenants on low income.

QUICKLY

Computer deal
CompuServe, the pioneer of online services, is to be swallowed by America Online in a £758m three-way deal also involving WorldCom. Page 17

500 drowned
Up to 500 Haitians were feared drowned after an overloaded ferry sank off the Caribbean island's west coast. Up to 800 were on board. Page 10

Hume not to run
The SDLP leader John Hume ended a month of political speculation by saying he will not stand for election as president of the Irish Republic. Page 4

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Reader, Jane Eyre was a woman who lived

David Lister
Arts News Editor

Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, one of the best-loved novels in the English language, may have been inspired by a real person.

A Jane Eyre lived in Yorkshire, a few miles from the Brontës' home, and was known among Charlotte Brontë's circle, new research by a retired teacher has established.

Both the real life Jane Eyre and the fictional character were thwarted in love before marrying and enjoying happiness. "Reader, I married him," as the fictional Jane Eyre declares. There, though, the parallels seem to end.

The real Jane Eyre was a member of a Moravian settlement, a Protestant Episcopal movement, and lived virtually as a nun for a period before marrying a surgeon.

But last night Mike Hill, director of the Brontë Parsonage Museum, acknowledged: "It does make you look at *Jane Eyre* the novel in a slightly different way from now on. It pulls it down to earth a bit more."

Margaret Connor, a retired teacher from Fulneck near Leeds, found there was a woman called Frances Jane Eyre who lived in a Moravian settlement in her home village. The discovery was given

added weight by Dr Patrick Wilson, of Keele University, whose ancestor Mary Liley was a cousin of Frances Jane Eyre. She was also a friend of Ellen Nussey, a close friend of Charlotte Brontë.

Mr Hill says: "Mary Liley was a Moravian and knew Ellen Nussey who was one of Charlotte's closest friends. Indeed Mary Susan Liley wrote about her in her journal. Charlotte would probably have known about Frances Jane Eyre."

The Moravian archives for 1843 record that "Single Sister Fanny Jane Eyre has formed a connexion with a Mr Macmillan, a surgeon of Pudsey, but ... the thing is not in state of

forwardness." At that time female teachers were not allowed to marry. Mary Liley's journal actually refers to the woman as Jane Eyre and records that she was "afterwards married to the late Dr Macmillan of Pudsey."

Referring to her discovery of the name in the archives of Fulneck Moravian Church, Pudsey, Margaret Connor says: "I could hardly believe my eyes. Little did I think as a child that years later I would discover a Jane Eyre who may well have been the novel's namesake."

Mr Hill stressed: "It doesn't in any sense lessen Charlotte's ability as a storyteller to acknowledge that she may have taken on some of this."



Samantha Morton as Jane in the LWT adaptation of *Jane Eyre*. It appears there was a real Fanny Jane Eyre in Charlotte Brontë's circle



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news

significant shorts

Parents donate son's organs for vital transplants

The organs of an eight-year-old boy who died after a brain haemorrhage are being given to at least five other people so they may live or improve the quality of their lives. Aaron Bennett's liver has gone to a three-year-old girl, one of his kidneys to a 10-year-old girl and the other to a woman. His heart valves are also being used as are the corneas from his eyes.

Aaron's parents, from Wilsden, West Yorkshire, made the decision to donate his organs as they kept a bedside vigil at Leeds General Infirmary. Aaron was taken ill 12 days ago when he complained of a headache. Scans revealed burst blood vessels in his brain. His mother, Angela, said she and her husband, Andrew, decided immediately to donate his organs. She added: "We were aware of how other parents with poorly children would be feeling. We wanted to give someone else a chance from our loss."

The transplant co-ordinator in Leeds, Steve Bell, said he could not comment on individual cases but added that child deaths in these circumstances were rare and the opportunities for donating child organs were precious.

Esther Leach

Solidarity for sacked dockers

Sacked Liverpool dockers say thousands of colleagues around the world stopped work yesterday to support their campaign to win back their jobs. It is almost two years since the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company locked out the 329 dockers after they refused to cross an unofficial picket line in support of 80 colleagues made redundant by an independent stevedoring company. They were sacked and have since been involved in the bitter campaign which includes continuous picketing the Port of Liverpool.

A spokesman for the Liverpool dockers said yesterday's International Day of Action was supported in Australia, North America, Canada, Denmark, Japan and Sweden. However, a spokeswoman for the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company said the action had not affected trade. The sacked workers will mark the second anniversary of the dispute with a rally in Liverpool on 27 September.

Jeffrey Bernard's racing certainty

He began his journalistic career as racing correspondent, and named the sport as a great love - after drink and sex. Now Jeffrey Bernard (left) the bon vivant and Soho habitué who died last Friday, is to be laid to rest among the horses.



His ashes are to be placed in an urn buried under a stone at the Gallops, the training ground for Lambourn racecourse, in Berkshire, his brother Oliver said yesterday.

The 65-year-old *Spectator* columnist, who once described a racecourse as "simply an al fresco piss-up", had loved the area, Oliver Bernard said. "He lived near there, he loved the place - it's very beautiful - and he had some very good friends there among the trainers and jockeys."

Mr Bernard said that there was no room to bury his brother in Soho. However, the decision has yet to be agreed to by Lambourn officials.

Magistrate fined over pollution

A magistrate was fined £9,000 when he appeared in court charged with polluting the environment. David Distin, chief magistrate of the East Berkshire Magistrates' Court Circuit, was also ordered to pay £300 costs by magistrates at Basildon in Hampshire.

The court heard that Mr Distin's building company, HC Distin Ltd, of Maidenhead, Berkshire, had created the pollution when three temporary school classrooms were burnt. Berkshire County Council had granted a contract to the company to remove and dispose of the huddings from Emmbrook School in Wokingham. However, instead of taking them to a licensed waste disposal site, the structures, which contained wiring, insulation material and polystyrene, were burnt in a field beside the M4 in April this year.

In a separate prosecution brought by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, HC Distin Ltd was fined £4,500 with £1,200 costs for breaching the Clean Air Act 1993.

Inquiry into abuse at care homes

The author of a critical report on residential care is to head an independent inquiry into the abuse of mentally handicapped people in two private homes in Buckinghamshire. Tom Burgner, 65, a former senior civil servant, was appointed yesterday to conduct the inquiry into the Longcare case which ended earlier this year with three members of care home staff being found guilty of neglecting and ill-treating residents.

The investigation is being held following pressure from the Department of Health after criticisms from victims' family that Buckinghamshire County Council had not done enough to prevent abuse of mentally disabled people. The abuse occurred for a decade from 1983 at two homes run by Gordon and Angela Rowe as Longcare Ltd in Stoke Poges. Gordon Rowe committed suicide before he could be charged with raping residents. Angela Rowe was jailed for two-and-a-half years this summer for ill-treating and neglecting residents.

Louise Jury

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people



Top job: Ms Jenkins, above with fiancé William Hague, will have to negotiate with ministers

Ffion Jenkins appointed to top arts position

Ffion Jenkins, fiancée of William Hague, leader of the opposition, has been appointed to a key job in the arts, which will involve her liaising closely with government ministers.

Ms Jenkins has been appointed director of operations at Absa, the Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts. The key aspect of the job will be to manage the operation and development of the Pairing Scheme, the Government's arts sponsorship incentive scheme which Absa manages on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Absa is the national independent association which promotes and encourages partnerships between the private sector and the arts. It works extensively with the UK's top businesses and arts organisations to develop arts sponsorship. Its patron is the Prince of Wales. But it also works closely with government, directing business sponsorship cash towards the arts, and Absa officials having regular talks with ministers and civil servants.

An Absa spokesman said: "Her own personal position has been considered, but neither we nor the Department of Culture, Media and Sport see any problem."

We did inform the Department of her appointment, as is standard procedure. She will have some involvement with ministers, but most of her involvement will be with civil servants."

Ms Jenkins said: "After having an international reputation for promoting excellence in partnerships between businesses and the arts and looking forward to the challenge of making a positive contribution to the cultural life of the country."

She has had a strong interest in the arts, performing with the National Youth Choir and playing clarinet with the National Youth Orchestra of Wales.

Colin Tweedy, Absa's director general, said yesterday: "We are delighted that Ffion is joining Absa's team at this exciting period in our development. More than ever, arts sponsorship is being used as an essential part of business communications as well as a powerful medium for corporate community involvement. Ffion's wide experience and enthusiasm will be a tremendous asset as we promote business involvement with the arts to the new generation of business decision makers."

David Lister

Beatles' 'beautiful' PR man dies aged 65

Derek Taylor, who was press officer to The Beatles at the height of their fame, has died at the age of 65, it was announced last night.

A spokesman for Apple Records said he died at his home in Suffolk after a long illness.

Sir Paul McCartney said last night that he was a beautiful man. "It's time for tears and words may come later," he said.

Taylor, pictured, who was originally from Liverpool, was the northern showbusiness correspondent for the *Daily Express* and covered his first Beatles concert in May 1963.

"Magnificent... the spectacle of these fresh, cheeky, sharp, young entertainers in opposition to the shiny-eyed teenage idolaters is as good as a rejuvenating drug for the jaded adult," he wrote afterwards.

He began to take a close interest in the group and became their press officer the following year. He ghost-wrote George Harrison's newspaper column and also Brian Epstein's autobiography.



phy A Cellarful of Noise. He travelled with the Beatles on their world tour before moving to the United States to be publicist for the Byrds, The Beach Boys and The Grateful Dead.

But in 1968 he returned to England to resume working with the Beatles.

Philip Norman, the Beatles' biographer, said: "It was Derek Taylor's unique accomplishment to be a press officer whom journalists pursued."

"They pursued him because Derek Taylor was not a monster."

Kate Watson-Smyth

Fittipaldi breaks back in plane crash

The racing champion, Emerson Fittipaldi, fractured his lower back in an ultralight plane crash and escaped death only because the aircraft fell in a swamp, a doctor said yesterday.

The 50-year-old Brazilian, pictured right, and his 6-year-old son, Luca, the only two people on the plane, were taken to the Sao Paulo Hospital in Aracaju, a citrus-growing region about 220 miles (350 kilometers) north-west of Sao Paulo, shortly after midnight on Sunday.

X-rays revealed a fracture in the lumbar region, and Fittipaldi reported difficulty in moving his left leg. Dr Luiz Roberto Neves, the hospital's clinical director, said in a radio interview.

"By some miracle, Luca didn't have even a cut," Neves said.

Neves said Fittipaldi told doctors the motor stalled and the ultralight crashed into a swamp from a height of about 300 feet.

"It wasn't a forced landing. It was a crash," Neves said. "The swamp saved [them], if [they] had fallen on solid ground, [they] surely would have been killed."

briefing

SOCIETY

Poverty can seriously damage your health

Men at the bottom of the social scale are three times as likely to die prematurely than the well off according to a new report by the Office for National Statistics. Although death rates have improved for everyone in the last twenty years the poor are likely not only to have shorter lives but have greater risks of ill-health and disability.

Life expectancy is five years less for men and three years less for women who are at the bottom of the social scale compared with the top. This difference has increased since the early 1970s (when for men there were 806 and 280 deaths per 100,000 in 1991-93 compared to 597 and 500 deaths per 100,000 in 1970-72). Men are also more likely to suffer from lung cancer or commit suicide.

Unemployment carries a high risk of premature mortality with men and women unemployed in 1981 having an excess mortality of a third over the period 1981-92. The risk was particularly high amongst the younger unemployed (ages 16-44) where men had a 58 per cent and women a 69 per cent excess.

Health Inequalities - Decennial Supplement is published by the Stationery Office, price £35

Glenda Cooper

MEDIA

Speed sells, but causes offence

Advertisements featuring sex and speed fell foul of the public in the latest Advertising Standards Authority monthly report.

The ASA upheld a number of complaints from people worried that car advertisements were encouraging drivers to break the law and drive too fast. A complaint against a Citroën Saxo magazine ad that claimed its acceleration was a "sprinter-twisting 0-60 in 7.2 seconds" and had a piece of toilet paper stuck to the page, was upheld. A number of complaints were also upheld against a Honda Civic poster campaign that featured the car against a blurred background.

Paul McCann

ECONOMICS

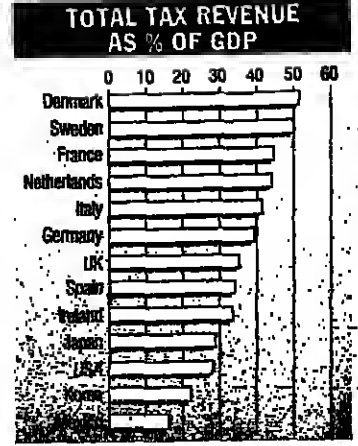
Tax cut perception exposed as myth

The perception of a widespread tax-cutting trend amongst the world's richest economies is overturned by new figures which show that tax burden has climbed steadily in almost all cases since 1980. The exceptions have been the Netherlands, where it has declined, and the UK and Germany, where the share of national output taken by taxes has been flat.

Preliminary estimates collected by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development show that 10 of its 24 member countries did reduce the ratio of taxes to Gross Domestic Product last year, while increased it. But there had been more tax-cutting in 1995, with 14 countries (although not the UK) achieving a reduction.

The figures show that the tax take in the UK is in the bottom half of the range. New OECD members Mexico and Korea had the lowest ratios in 1996, at 16 and 23.2 per cent of GDP respectively, although the US and Japan are not much further ahead. By contrast, the Danish and Swedish governments take 51.9 per cent of GDP in tax, with Belgium and France not far behind. Britain occupied a mid-Atlantic ranking of just over 35 per cent.

Diane Coyle



HEALTH

Authorities failing child ME sufferers

Children who suffer from a debilitating fatigue condition are getting a poor deal from the education system, a survey has revealed. Although more than 50 per cent of all long-term sickness absence from school is due to the chronic fatigue syndrome Myalgic Encephalomyelitis, or ME, only a quarter of home tutors were given information of how the condition affects youngsters, according to research by the charity Action for ME.

The charity's chiefs have claimed that the lack of understanding about the condition which affects 25,000 school children in the UK could be putting their education at risk. The survey of 70 local education authorities revealed many home tutors were unaware that the condition affects memory and concentration, making learning exhausting and difficult.

Martin Arber, chair of Action for ME, said: "Only 25 per cent of home tutors receive any information about ME from either the school or local education authority."

"Without a broad understanding of the illness it would be very easy for a tutor to push a child too hard causing a relapse lasting weeks. ME is a fluctuating condition and the child's ability to learn can change from day to day."

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Uphill struggle: Clive Langford with his flock at Brook Farm, Waterhouses, Staffordshire

Photograph: Newsteam

Upland farmers take the high road out

Amanda Kelly

The long-term future of thousands of traditional family upland farms in some of the country's most scenic and wild areas could be at risk unless the Government steps in to help, farmers claimed yesterday.

Increasingly modest financial rewards has meant that vast numbers of young people are quitting the family business to find more prosperous work in towns and cities and there are few people willing to take their place.

Yesterday the National Farmers' Union sent a tough warning to the Government that, unless action is taken, vast sections of the farming industry could be destroyed and large areas of the countryside reduced to a barren wilderness.

A survey carried out by the union showed that 43 per cent of hill farmers' children would not be taking over the farm when their parents retired. Most cited low annual income levels as the main reason.

The NFU's president, Sir David Nash, said: "With no natural successor, the UK's upland communities face a bleak and bitter future."

"Areas such as the Lake District, Soowdonia and Brecon Beacons, are an invaluable environmental asset for the nation, with much of their character a direct result of farming activities over many centuries. Without profitable hill farming this will be lost for future generations."

Upland farms in what are known as the Less Favoured Areas account for more than half of the total UK agricultural area and employ more than 170,000 farmers and workers. Two-thirds of the UK's specialist beef herd and breeding ewes are found in these areas and they produce more than a quarter of the nation's milk.

Yet the 1996 Farm Business Survey carried out annually showed that 42 per cent of cattle and sheep farms in Less Favoured Areas had net farm incomes of less than £10,000. This, coupled with harsh working conditions and reduced market prices in livestock, means that hill farming is no longer an attractive proposition for many.

Sir David said: "Farmers in the hills and uplands have to overcome many disadvantages including the weather, soil quality and remoteness. This is compounded by the fact that the current outlook for farm incomes on UK livestock farms as a whole is bleaker than it has been for years."

Farmers are now calling on the Government to increase the Livestock Compensatory Allowances, an additional payment made to hill farmers over and above the European funding.

More newspapers pledge royal privacy

Paul McCann
Media Correspondent

A new era in relations between newspapers and the Royal Family seemed likely yesterday, following Earl Spencer's stinging attack on the press in his eulogy at Saturday's funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales.

The Sun, the Mirror, the Daily Star, the Daily Mail and local newspapers joined The Independent yesterday in making commitments not to publish intrusive or paparazzi pictures of the princes William and Har-

ry. The Express will make the same pledge today.

Andrew Marr, editor of The Independent, said the newspaper would never publish photographs of the princes in private situations and would limit occasions when it used photo-opportunities created by Buckingham Palace.

Associated Newspapers, owners of the Daily Mail, the Mail on Sunday and the Evening Standard, promised never to use any paparazzi shots unless authorised by its proprietor, Lord Rothermere.

However, Lord Rothermere admitted on the BBC yesterday: "If my fellow proprietors don't agree with me, I don't know how long I can keep up that instruction."

The Express makes the same promise today in a leading article. It says it would only use pictures of the princes authorised by Buckingham Palace and will stop using "snatched" photographs of celebrities.

The best-selling tabloids, the Sun and the Mirror whose circulation war has been blamed by some commentators for the

rise of intrusive celebrity journalism, also promised to leave the princes alone.

"The Mirror will now work swiftly with the Press Complaints Commission to protect these boys from intrusive paparazzi photography," the paper's leader said yesterday.

The Sun, for its part, said it had "no intention of carrying photographs which invade the privacy of Princes William and Harry."

The Times has a policy of only using "intrusive" photographs if there is a serious public inter-

est. The Daily Telegraph is known to believe that the tabloids need to rethink their entire approach to the Royals, but that it is unaffected by the paparazzi debate.

The new found respect for the privacy of the Royals will be underlined when the Press Complaints Commission's code committee meets this Thursday to adapt the code governing newspapers' behaviour.

Lord Wakeham, chairman of the PCC, is touring newspaper offices this week to discuss changes before the meeting.

On the agenda are changes in the rules covering the interviewing or photographing of the children of famous people. At present, the rules simply state that children under 16 cannot be interviewed without their parents' permission.

There is also likely to be a strengthening of the commitments newspapers have to make to ensure that any freelance photographers working for them also comply with the PCC code on intrusion and privacy.

In direct relation to the two

princes it is expected that the PCC-brokered agreement not to photograph them at school in return for formally posed shots on holiday or at Balmoral will be scrapped to give the boys even more privacy.

For some, however, the promises were not enough. Roger Gale, former Conservative vice-chairman of the National Heritage select committee, said he had offered "one hollow cheer" in response to the undertakings given by some newspapers that they will

not publish intrusive pictures of princes William and Harry.

He said: "To date, the press have offered as little as possible in response to public revulsion at press intrusion."

"The press had already agreed - two years ago - not to snatch pictures of Prince William at school and this extra 'undertaking' by some newspapers will do little to satisfy those that believe that intrusion into, particularly, private grief and into private life, using modern technology, must be curbed."

Call for Heathrow airport to be named after Diana

Louise Jury

The desire for permanent memorials to Diana, Princess of Wales, prompted calls yesterday for Heathrow Airport to be named and for a children's hospital in her honour to be built in place of the Millennium Dome.

As tens of thousands of pounds flooded in to the Diana, Princess of Wales, Memorial Fund, the debate began over other appropriate memorials to the princess.

Lindsay Hoyle, Labour MP for Cheshire, wrote to BAA, which operates Heathrow, urging a name change which would echo Paris's Charles de Gaulle and New York's John F. Kennedy airports in honouring national heroes. William Hague, the Conservative leader, backed the idea.

Tory MP Sir Teddy Taylor called for the cancellation of the Millennium Dome at Greenwich and for an international

children's hospital to be built on the site instead. He said he had received hundreds of letters of support for the idea.

A Downing St spokesman said the special committee headed by the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, which will examine memorial ideas, would take cross-party soundings on all suggestions. "Nothing is ruled out and nothing is ruled in."

Donations poured into the memorial fund. Around 350 mourners an hour have called a 24-hour credit card line to make pledges, and extra BT volunteers have been drafted in to help.

The average size of each donation was £20, making £7,000 an hour and £168,000 a day. These sums supplement thousands of cheques filling post bags to Kensington Palace, said Kate Day, of Mishcon de Reya, the law firm which acted for the princess and which will administer the fund.

About 2,700 cheques have been cleared so far. Nearly all come from private individuals, most of whom have sent between £5 and £10.

Only two trustees - Anthony Julius, the princess's lawyer, and Michael Gibbins, her private secretary - have been appointed for the fund so far. No decisions have been made as to whether it will be a short-term or long-term institution, but among the charities likely to benefit are those Princess Diana was associated with at her death.

The fund will be boosted tonight by proceeds from the game between Fulham football club, whose chairman is Mohamed al-Fayed, and Plymouth Argyle.

Mr al-Fayed, whose son, Dodi, died with Princess Diana, will make his first public appearance since her funeral tonight. A lone piper will play a lament, which will be followed by a minute's silence.

Richard Branson has discussed recording a Christmas album in memory of Diana, with performers including Sir Paul McCartney, Phil Collins, Eric Clapton, Luciano Pavarotti, Sting, and Bryan Adams. He hopes to include Elton John's newly recorded version of *Candle in the Wind*, which was performed at the funeral and is expected to make millions for the fund when it is released in the next few days.

Mr Branson said he also hoped to set up annual anniversary concerts.

As Britain slowly returned to normal yesterday, the Union Flag, which was flown at half-mast over Buckingham Palace following public protests, was finally lowered.

Workers will begin today to remove the flowers from Kensington and Buckingham Palaces, keeping the messages for the princess and taking surviving blooms to the elderly and hospitals.

Bodyguard could make full recovery from crash injuries

John Lichfield
Paris

Trevor Rees-Jones, the only survivor of the crash which killed Diana, Princess of Wales, could make a full recovery, his family said yesterday.

Mr Rees-Jones, a bodyguard employed by the al-Fayed family, suffered severe facial and head injuries but these were not as serious as early reports suggested. In particular, officials have denied a leak from the Pitié Salpêtrière hospital last week which suggested that his tongue was severed and he may never talk again.

The former paratrooper's mother and father, Jill and Ernie Rees-Jones, issued a press statement in Paris yesterday in which they revealed that their son had a 10-hour operation last Thursday "for facial reconstruction".



Trevor Rees-Jones: Facial operation was successful

The couple thanked the medical team at the hospital and the al-Fayed family, which has been paying the bills for their stay in Paris.

A street or square in Paris - possibly close to the site of the crash last Sunday week - is likely to be named after Princess Diana.

A small square, beside the exit from the underpass in which Princess Diana's car crashed, was due to be renamed after Maria Callas this week, but this was delayed yesterday by the Mayor of Paris, Jean Tiberi. The town hall said he intended to consult with the families of the crash victims before proposing a site to the city council.

Officials added that the square near the underpass could now be reserved for Princess Diana but that this would depend on the views of

her family. Parisians have already turned the larger square above the tunnel itself - the Place de l'Alma - into an impromptu shrine to the Princess and many have called for it officially to be given her name.

Police and investigators yesterday refused to say when they would release the results of the third blood-alcohol test conducted on the driver of crashed car, Henri Paul.

Earlier tests, which were made public within one day, suggested that he was driving with more than three times the permitted level of alcohol in his blood.

Mr Paul's family asked for a further test last week and a British expert retained by the al-Fayed family said the earlier findings were "unreliable". A third test was conducted last Friday.



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news

Bank expects high rate of interest in open day

Kim Sengupta

The august Courtroom of the Bank of England can be viewed for the first time ever by the public as part of this year's Heritage Open Days. Visitors will be given a guided tour of the neo-classical room, where the Bank's directors meet before deciding on economic affairs of state.

The Courtroom, designed by Sir Robert Taylor in 1774, was moved from its original ground floor location to the first floor during rebuilding work between 1925 to 39.

The room is the traditional place for the Bank's governing board to gather before adjourning to an adjoining office to rule on matters such as the interest rates.

Nearly 2,000 buildings, from castles to cottages, abbeys to chapels, power stations to mills, and theatres to court houses, will open their doors with guided tours, exhibitions, talks and boat trips during Heritage Open Days '97.

Opening the event at the Bank in Threadneedle Street, Culture, Media, and Sport Secretary Chris Smith, said: "The Bank is participating in the event for the first time this year and I know that people will be fascinated to see behind the doors of key national institution."

"The event continues to grow in popularity and provides an excellent opportunity for people to see and appreciate the country's hidden wealth of buildings of historic, architectural or cultural interest."

The heritage open days started in France in 1985 and in 1991 the Council of Europe launched the European Heritage Days. Last year in Britain over 1,000 people visited 1,750 properties in London and throughout England.

The event will take place across England in various venues on the weekend of September 13-14, apart from the capital when it will be on September 20-21.



Treasure grove: Chris Smith launches this year's Heritage Open Days inside the Bank of England, where the Courtroom is to be opened to public view for the first time Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

Hume will not run for Irish presidency



David McKitterick and Alan Murdock

SDLP leader John Hume yesterday ended a month of political speculation by announcing that he would not put himself forward as next president of the Irish Republic.

In the statement he said he felt it his duty to stay with the SDLP in the task of working for "a new and agreed Ireland based on a lasting settlement and a lasting peace."

Describing the decision as very difficult, Mr Hume said he had been given many good reasons for seeking the presidency but that these had been outweighed by "the very serious crisis in the north."

His decision means he will lead his party into the political talks which re-open in Belfast today. It also means that Northern Ireland will not lose a man who for almost three decades has been a commanding figure in its political landscape.

Yesterday's announcement brought to an end a period of uncharacteristic prevarication on the part of the SDLP leader, who early last month said he would take some time to make up his mind on the matter.

The current president, Mary Robinson, leaves the post shortly to take up a senior position with the United Nations. She said yesterday, during a visit to Belfast, that long-term sustainable peace was within reach "if the risks

for peace that people have taken in their own lives can be reflected in the more difficult set of circumstances of a political framework."

Opinion polls and other evidence in the Republic have shown that Mr Hume's popularity far outstripped that of any of the other potential contenders to succeed Mrs Robinson. The almost universal feeling is that if he wanted the post he could have had it.

Mr Hume has been a pivotal figure at the centre of political negotiations since the late 1960s, in more recent years playing a crucial role in the peace process which has led to two cessations of IRA violence. During that period he has also amassed a formidable stockpile of political capital in Dublin, Washington and Europe.

As such, his departure at a

time when efforts are being made to underpin ceasefires with new political arrangements would have been a major and potentially traumatic moment for Irish nationalism. The decision to stay means the SDLP leader, who was there at the eruption of the troubles, will face a chance of realising his ambition of being present at their conclusion.

Mr Hume's decision creates a crisis for the main Dublin Government party Fianna Fail (FF). Former Taoiseach Albert Reynolds now becomes the front-runner to seeking its nomination, but party leaders are worried that his tendency to speak out on delicate Northern Ireland issues could wrong-foot his successor Bertie Ahern during the imminent multi-party talks.

Despite his achievements in advancing the 1994 IRA and

Loyalist ceasefires, Mr Reynolds' image at home has suffered from events surrounding the collapse of his government, his role in allowing controversial credits for beef exports to Saddam Hussein's Iraq which may have cost taxpayers £100m, and his involvement in a series of legal actions against the press.

Mr Reynolds' insistence on running, regardless of Mr Hume's possible aspirations to become head of state, may have helped discourage the SDLP leader by threatening an unseemly nomination dog-fight before he even got on the ballot paper.

Mr Hume may also have been put off by arguments in Dublin, notably from Labour politicians, that voters would feel short-changed if Mr Hume was given a free run by all main Dail parties, removing

the need for an election. Though pressed to run by deputy premier and Progressive Democrat leader Mary Harney, Mr Hume was not invited to stand by FF.

Fine Gael have two declared hopefuls, Mary Banotti MEP, 58, a grand-niece of Michael Collins, and former junior minister Avril Doyle, 48.

Labour will consider their options for supporting either an internal candidate or a non-party figure at a meeting today. FF and Fine Gael will discuss their selection at parliamentary party meetings next week. Independents and Greens are supporting Joycean scholar and gay rights activist David Norris.

Singer Dana, backed by a small right-wing Christian prayer group, is unlikely to secure the 20 parliamentary or four local council endorsements required for a nomination.

Sinn Fein lines up to sign pledge on non-violence

A Sinn Fein delegation is due at Stormont in Belfast today to sign pledges of non-violence which will act as the ticket for the republicans' formal entry into multi-party talks.

The signing ceremony, which may be boycotted by some Unionist parties, means Sinn Fein will have fulfilled all the conditions laid down by the British and Irish governments for inclusion in negotiations.

Much more problematical for the governments, because of Sinn Fein's entry, will be the position of the Ulster Unionist party. This, the main Protestant grouping, has yet to make a formal decision on whether to enter the talks proper which begin next Monday.

Protestant opinion seems clearly in favour of participation in the talks, but party leaders are unlikely to agree to meet Sinn

Fein. The general expectation is that the party will go to the talks but refuse to sit in the same room as Sinn Fein.

Today the Sinn Fein delegation is to sign up to the six "Mitchell principles" formulated by the chairman of the talks, former US Senator George Mitchell. These affirm a commitment to the total disarmament of all paramilitary organisations, a renunciation of the use of force and agreement to abide by the terms of any new agreement reached in the negotiations.

Opponents of Sinn Fein have seized on the fact that the party is plainly not trying to persuade the IRA to decommission its weapons, and charge that the promise not to resort to force is meaningless. The familiar Sinn Fein response is that it is separate from the IRA and speaks only for itself.

The president of Sinn Fein, Gerry Adams, back from an American fund-raising tour, yesterday added the accusation that other parties which had already signed up to the Mitchell principles had in effect flouted them.

He said that loyalist groups, whose representatives sit in the talks, had carried out killings, and the RUC and British army had used plastic bullets - contradicting the principles.

A Sinn Fein delegation which

Protestants yet to make decision on attendance, writes David McKitterick

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A Sinn Fein delegation which

yesterday met the minister for political development, Paul Murphy, complained of what it described as lack of movement in releasing republican prisoners as well as security force patrolling and searches.

The Government's proposed ban on foreign fund-raising by political parties could prove a significant blow to Sinn Fein. Labour MP Harry Barnes suggested last night, writes Anthony Bevin.

Mr Barnes, a member of the Commons select committee on Northern Ireland, reports that Sinn Fein have raised £250,000 of their recent fund-raising visit to the States should concern all British and Irish democrats. Donors did not live in the UK or Ireland "and neither suffer nor enjoy the consequences of Sinn Fein's enhanced abilities to promote their message."

Bid to block rail firm's bonus payment after trains cancelled

Randeep Ramesh
Transport Correspondent

A regional transport authority wants to withhold "bonus payments" to a private rail company which cancelled more than 175 trains a week last month.

Mick Lyons, chair of West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority, said that passengers on Regional Railways North East (RRNE), which runs trains between Newcastle, Manchester and Liverpool, have been "faced with the worst service they have had in the last 10 years. In the most recent four-week accounting period 703 trains have been cancelled with a further 47 part-cancellations," he said.

The cuts in services have badly hit commuter lines around Leeds, where the company let 100 drivers take early redundancy. The problem is that while areas in West Yorkshire have been affected, the train operator has improved the service on other parts of the network.

This has meant that performance payments exceed the penalties for the cuts. For June, RRNE is entitled to a bonus of £185,000 - more than five times the £33,000 it faces in financial penalties for the cancellations.

The transport authority meets today to endorse the proposal, put forward by Cllr Lyons. Under rail privatisation, the authority pays £47m a year for its local rail

services, run by bus company MTL since March, and also administers performance payouts.

MTL has suffered from a lack of drivers on some routes. It also blames protracted negotiations with Aslef, the drivers' union, over a new wages and conditions package. A spokesman for MTL declined to comment.

However, rail industry insiders pointed out that the contract between the passenger authority and the private company are "legally binding". "It is not up to politicians to decide when and if these payments are made. The authority just has to pay them," said one expert.

Jonathan Bray, campaigns director for rail pressure group

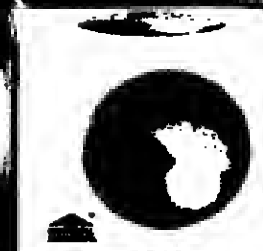
Save Our Railways, said that the cuts were inevitable as the sell-off was completed "on the basis of cost-reduction". "This was bound in the end to be passed onto the passenger," he added.

A busy commuter train company has bowed to widespread criticism and is reinstating some services it had planned to drop from its winter timetable.

Passenger groups had attacked the original decision by Connex South Central to run 70 fewer trains a day than it has operated this summer.

Yesterday Connex said it would now be keeping four of the axed trains on when the winter timetable starts on September 28.

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Mensa racks its brains over who should succeed Sir Clive

Ian Burrell

An inquest next week into the mysterious death of the sacked executive director of Mensa will intensify a bitter power struggle in the society for people with high IQs.

The *Independent* has obtained a copy of an internal Mensa report which questions the organisation's decision to dismiss Harold Gale, who became deeply depressed and died after crashing his car in February.

The inquest follows the recent decision by Sir Clive Sinclair to step down as Mensa's chairman after 15 years.

The move has prompted a dirty battle to succeed him, with photographs of one male Mensa official wearing women's underwear being circulated ahead of next month's election.

Mr Gale was sacked after 19 years with Mensa over allegations that he ran a private business from the society's offices. An industrial tribunal last year was told that Mr Gale had kept the Mensa board in the dark over his activities, selling puzzles and a magazine called

way the society was run.

As Mr Ford began probing the society's financial affairs, a decision was taken to launch what has become known as "the dawn raid", when three senior Mensa officers arrived at the society's headquarters in Wolverhampton on 6 February 1995, suspended Mr Gale and another member of staff and changed the locks to the offices.

In May last year, Mr Gale took Mensa to an industrial tribunal in Birmingham. Although it ruled that he had been unfairly dismissed by his employer, Mensa Administration Ltd, he was not awarded compensation because it was decided that he had abused the organisation's trust.

But the Ford report, completed a month after Mr Gale's suspension, cites minutes from various meetings of the British Mensa committee, which clearly mention Mr Gale's business activities.

At a meeting on 28 April 1984, Mensa director David Schulman pointed out that "The £5,000 per annum from the publication *Mind Games* was at present going to Mensa



Intelligence community: Carol Vorderman and Sir Clive Sinclair have been caught up in the power struggle at Mensa after the death of Harold Gale, right. Photomontage: Mark Hayman

done in the office's time," he said.

He said he had proposed that Mr Gale should resign and take a consultancy with Mensa but that Mr Ford said that it was a trick and had talked him out

of it. "Things would have turned out very, very different, I feel very, very bitter," said Sir Clive. After Mr Gale was sacked at the age of 54, friends said he became a broken man, finding it

difficult to find employment and slipping into financial difficulties.

Then on 23 February he died after crashing his car. An inquest into the death will take place next week in Telford, Shropshire.

Two days after the inquest, to which some Mensa members are expected to be called to give evidence, Mensa will hold its first charity ball. Guests - described as "a heady mix of high

IQ and high society" - will gather at St Ermin's hotel in Westminster for a champagne reception, dinner and cabaret. Sir Clive, who will retain membership of the society, said he hoped the election would in-

ject new vigour into the society. "I have been chairman for something like 15 years now and I just think it's long enough. It needs new blood."

□ Answer to puzzle: Rainbow

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HAVE	MACE
SHOW	ITCH
IRIS	HEX
READ	LIVE
STAG	SLAB

The test: An example of a Mensa puzzle. Using one letter change the second letter of each word to the left and the right. Two other English words must be formed. Place the letter used in the empty section. When this has been completed for all the words another word can be read down. What is the word? Answer at end of story

Mind Games.

But a report, written by British Mensa director Brian Ford, details minutes from Mensa committee meetings which show that senior officials were aware of Mr Gale's business activities for more than a decade before he was dismissed.

The report concludes: "It must be said that the documentation cited above, and the course of subsequent events, do not appear to support [the board's] claims. It now seems these matters were well-known to the chairman, the treasurer and the secretary for years. No action was taken."

Mr Ford, a scientist based in Cambridgeshire who is no longer a director but remains a Mensa member, said he had been asked to investigate after repeated innuendo from Mensa members - known to the board as "the irritant tendency" - about irregularities in the

Administration Ltd.

"He felt that the proceeds should go directly to British Mensa Ltd. He also stated that it was a good publication and carried the Mensa name well."

Mr Ford said: "The officers insisted that Harold Gale's extra-mural activities were a revelation. The company minutes suggest otherwise."

Mr Ford is now standing in the election for a new chairman, seconded by the television presenter Carol Vorderman.

She said: "I thought Harold was a very nice man and when I was on the committee it was general knowledge that he was writing these Mensa puzzle magazines."

Sir Clive denied that the board had known the full extent of Mr Gale's activities. "We reached an agreement that it was fine as long as it was done in his spare time. We discovered that an awful lot of business was

DAILY POEM

Lullaby

By Rainer Maria Rilke
(translated by Stephen Cohn)

If one day I have to lose you
what could bring you sleep - unless
like a lime-tree's restless branches
I still whisper on above you?

Unless I keep watch about you
while you sleep - speak words which seem
to caress your breasts, your limbs,
fall like eyelids on your mouth.

Unless I enclose you safely
with all that you truly own -
as if in a quiet garden
stocked with balm and star-anise.

This week's Daily Poems come from Stephen Cohn's new translation of Rainer Maria Rilke's *New Poems*, which first appeared in German in 1907-08. *Neue Gedichte New Poems* is published by Carcanet (£9.95) in a bilingual edition, with an introduction by John Bayley.

news



John Gilligan: Facing murder charge in Irish Republic

Legal delay hits Guerin extradition

Jason Bennett
Crime Correspondent

Extradition proceedings against an alleged Dublin crime boss accused of murdering the Irish journalist Veronica Guerin opened yesterday, but were immediately challenged in court.

The Irish authorities want to bring John Gilligan back to Dublin and charge him with the murder of Ms Guerin, the possession and importation of drugs, and firearms offences.

By the hearing at Belmarsh Magistrates' Court in south-east London, which was surrounded by armed guards throughout, was adjourned until two weeks tomorrow after a challenge of abuse of process by Gilligan's lawyers.

Ms Guerin, 37, was shot dead at the wheel of her car in Dublin in June last year. Her killing followed a series of newspaper articles exposing the activities of Dublin gangsters and provoked a national outcry and a huge police investigation.

Oce man, Paul Ward, 32,

from Cumlin, Dublin, has already been charged with her murder.

Mr Gilligan, 45, of Blanchardstown, Dublin, was in Woolwich Crown Court earlier yesterday to face charges of drug smuggling and possession in Britain after being arrested by Customs and Excise at Heathrow Airport last October.

But Customs and Excise attempted to adjourn the case to allow extradition proceedings to start later in the day at the magistrates' court because of the severity of the allegations in the Republic of Ireland.

As well as the murder offence the Irish authorities are also seeking Mr Gilligan's return on six charges of possession of cannabis with intent to supply, five charges of importing cannabis and six charges of possessing firearms with intent to endanger life. The weapons included a Sten gun, a silenced barrel, one 9mm machine pistol and magazine and five Walther 9mm automatic pistols.

At Woolwich Crown Court Nigel Peters, for the prosecution,

told Judge Jeffrey Rucker: "Your honour will see charges include first and foremost murder, the murder of the Irish journalist Veronica Guerin."

He said the trial would not proceed on the basis of public interest, given the murder charge and the spirit of international co-operation.

Mr Gilligan's lawyer, Clare Montgomery QC, objecting to the adjournment of the Crown Court hearing, demanded the judge to order Customs and Excise to offer no evidence and record not guilty verdicts. She said it was unlawful to leave one case unfinished before moving on to another and called for an abuse of process hearing.

Paul Riddle, stipendiary magistrate at Belmarsh Magistrates' Court, ruled that a special abuse of process hearing would take place two weeks tomorrow to decide whether it was unlawful to adjourn one set of proceedings while going ahead with another.

Mr Gilligan was remanded in custody.



Veronica Guerin: Investigative journalist murdered in Dublin last June

Auditor criticises council for £1m unlawful payments

Christian Wolmar

A hundred former council officials who were given bonuses and enhanced pensions on retirement worth over £1m will not be forced to repay them, even though the payments have been ruled unlawful.

In a highly critical report into the extra payments made by the Loddoo Borough of Redbridge, the district auditor, Janet Eilbeck, of Coopers and Lybrand, says that the council made unlawful payments of £1,269,402 as a result of a scheme drawn up by its former chief executive, Geoff Price, who retired in 1993.

However, the council said yesterday that it was not going to attempt to recover any of the

money apart from around £230,000 paid to three senior officers - Mr Price, the former deputy chief executive, Maurice Tilley, and the former finance director, Stewart Fuller. The three had not upheld the normal standards expected of public servants, the report says.

The auditor investigated the possibility of Masonic influence. While 71 per cent of men who left the council on early retirement between 1989 and 1994 benefited from the payments, only 7 per cent of women did so.

The auditor says the council must reclaim money paid to Mr Fuller and decide whether to take action against Mr Price and Mr Tilley. No money has been recovered so far.

Council leader Liz Pearce said that following investigation "of each individual case", the council had decided the extra payments had been accepted in good faith and the money would not be recovered.

The revelation comes at a time when pension payments made by public bodies, in particular local authorities, are coming under greater scrutiny because of the very generous terms available under early retirement schemes in many organisations. The large number of early retirements has placed severe burdens on some local authority schemes, highlighted by the Chancellor's decision in the July Budget to remove tax breaks for dividends to pension funds. An Audit Commission in-

quiry into the wider issue is due to be published in November.

The Redbridge investigation followed an anonymous letter to the council suggesting that aspects of the "enhanced" pension scheme operated by Mr Price were unlawful. After the investigation by the council was launched in early 1994, the extra payments - which would have cost the council an estimated total of £2.2m based on actuarial assessments of the pensioners' life expectancy - were stopped. Had the scheme run its course, Mr Price would have received an extra £385,000 and Mr Tilley £295,000.

The council must decide next month whether to institute surcharge proceedings against the officers concerned.

University fees not a deterrent

Lacy Ward
Education Correspondent

The introduction of university tuition fees in Australia, under a scheme close in the one planned for Britain next year, has not deterred students from higher education, vice-chancellors will be told today.

At a conference on the impact of fees, sponsored by The Independent, Canberra University's deputy vice-chancellor, Meredith Edwards, will reveal that charges for teaching have not reduced demand for places or put off poorer students.

However, Professor Edwards will issue a strong warning on the danger of "linking" with a fees scheme once it is running.

The experience of Australia, which introduced income-contingent charges for university teaching in 1989, strongly influenced the Dearing Committee, whose report in July recommended the charging of fees in British universities.

The British government plans to begin in means tested tuition fees from October 1998, to be paid after graduation

when graduates' income reaches a certain level.

Graduates will be expected to pay around a quarter of the cost of a degree course, likely to total around £1,000 for each year of study.

Professor Edwards, a member of the committee which recommended higher education charges in Australia, will tell the Loddoo conference, organised by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, that the Dearing Committee "got it largely right".

Despite fears in the UK, including concerns expressed by backbench Labour MPs that fees will reduce access for some students, a survey of Australian school students found that out of 17 factors which might affect a decision not to go to university, charges rated 13th overall.

However, Professor Edwards will warn revising the scheme to increase charges, lower the income threshold at which graduates have to begin repayment or allow universities to charge top-up fees. Such moves, introduced in Australia, could cause uncertainty and potentially hit enrolments, she will say.



Coming in 2000: the new Mini

Kate Watson-Smyth

It was the first of its kind, a truly small car that could zip around the city streets and park in the smallest of spaces. The Mini, designed by Sir Alec Issigonis, became a symbol of the swinging 60s when London was the hippest city in the world.

Thirty years later, as the city is swinging again and pundits around the world are proclaiming it the capital of cool, BMW has unveiled the new Mini (pictured above), successor to the world's best-selling small car. Launched on the eve of the Frankfurt Motor Show, the new Mini will be in production in 2000. The car was designed by Rover Group, the British subsidiary of BMW, and will be built at its Birmingham plant. It will be powered by a four cylinder engine being developed by BMW and Chrysler. Nick Stephenson, design and engineering director of Rover, said the new model will be larger than the original car and will be targeted at wealthier consumers.

"Designing the new Mini for the new century is an awesome responsibility," he said. "We are dedicated to producing a car that is a worthy replacement for an icon of the world's motor industry."

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مكتبة الصلح

Revealed: secret life of the white whale

Charles Arthur and
Nicholas Schoon
report from the
British Association's
Festival of Science

Polar animals, such as beluga whales and elephant seals, have amazed scientists with their ability to navigate through enormous tracts of ocean and control their metabolism to stay alive.

The beluga also have a strange habit of dining in single-sex restaurants. Tiny tracking devices developed by British scientists are helping to shed light on the extraordinary and hitherto unknown roamings of this small, pure white whale.

Dr Tony Martin, of the Sea Mammal Research Unit at St Andrews University, told the British Association's annual Festival of Science in Leeds that the new technology had transformed their understanding of the fish-eating beluga.

It was thought to be a coastal, shallow-water species. It turns out that it can travel thousands of miles each year, dive to more than half a mile in depth and navigate long distances under ice, finding tiny, thinly scattered patches of unfrozen water where it must surface to breathe.

With his research partly funded by the Canadian government, Dr Martin is studying a group of belugas which migrates each year to the Mackenzie Delta on Canada's north coast, near the Alaskan border. There, they shed their skin over three weeks, scraping it off on the bottom before moving on.

Dr Martin's team has attached tracking devices to dozens of the whales. The devices continuously record the

depth of the whales. Whenever the animal surfaces to breathe, the device, about the same size as a mobile phone, rapidly beams its record of time and depth up to a satellite in a burst of electronic data, simultaneously registering the exact location of the whale.

From such data he has found that the whales follow "invisible motorways" as they head to sea, all following the same track. Mature males, weighing up to two tons, were found to head north, seeking out "the deepest trench for hundreds of miles around".

There they dived repeatedly to a depth of 500m, spending many minutes at the bottom. Dr Martin believes they were feeding on polar cod. "There must be fantastic food resources there," he said.

Only males ever go to this single-sex restaurant. Females and the young head for shallower

feeding grounds. He believes this is because they cannot dive for as long or to the same depth.

He also found another sort of dive, in which the males go as deep as 700m, then immediately

return to the surface instead of spending time looking for food. Dr Martin believes they do this because it helps them locate air holes in the ice many miles away, probably using sound.

"We found that, far from being coastal, they have access to the entire Arctic ocean," he said. As a result, he thinks their population may be more than twice as high as official estimates

of 40,000 to 80,000. More than 2,000 are killed for food each year by native peoples living in the high Arctic. Being small, they are not covered by the International Whaling Commission's moratorium on killing great whales.

Research by Professor Mike Fedak, another member of the Sea Mammal Research Unit, suggests that elephant seals living in the Antarctic appear to

Arctic explorer: Beluga whales have been found to swim vast distances and to dive to great depths, rather than sticking to shallow coastal waters, as had been thought.
Photograph: Peter Atkinson/Planet Earth

have some as yet unknown means of communication to tell each other where the best food sources are.

"Mothers dump their pups on the shoreline, leaving them with about one month's worth of fat to live off," said Prof Fedak. "They have to survive or die. In fact, about 50 per cent of pups die in their first year."

But those which survive seem to travel, alone, along the same routes and converge on the same feeding grounds. "They can navigate to places that they haven't been to before," such as tiny islands, Prof Fedak said. "There is no evidence yet that they make loud calls. But nobody knows, down there."

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Commentators, page 15



Sea birds could help set EU fishing quotas

The behaviour of gulls and terns should be used to help set European fish quotas, an ecology professor argued at the science festival yesterday.

Pat Monaghan of Glasgow University said that all the evidence showed that sea birds were vastly better than fishermen at finding fish. Their movements, success in breeding and physical condition could provide valuable information about the state of the stocks.

"They could be a useful component of fisheries management," she said. "For instance, we know hardly anything about saad eels [a small, very abundant fish near the base of the North Sea food web]. The birds know infinitely more about them than us."

Professor Monaghan said that when the saad eels stocks collapsed around Shetland in the late 1980s and early 1990s, sea bird colonies which were being studied were severely affected.

When fish stocks are low, observation has shown that the birds have far less free time because they have to spend much longer periods fishing. In times of plenty, the parent on fishing

duty - rather than being permanently with the egg and chick - can be seen hanging around the nest, resting for long periods.

"Some birds will only give very local information; arctic terns, for instance, do not fish much more than two miles from their nests. But others, like the kittiwake, travel as far as 25 miles. "They're not flying around for fun," said the professor. "Flying and fishing costs them energy. The greater the food available, the less far they would fly."

She suggested that radio tracking devices, which showed how far and where sea birds travelled and also their body weight at the start of the breeding season, would give most information about the distribution and size of fish stocks.

"We could go into partnership with the sea birds to our mutual benefit," she said. "The birds could tell us more about the state of fish populations which would hopefully lead to better management of them. And that in turn would prevent the over fishing and stock collapses which kill birds and put fishermen out of work."

Beckett plans better deal for academics

The Government hinted heavily yesterday that it thinks thousands of university staff currently in short-term research contracts should in future enjoy greater benefits and longer tenure.

The President of the Board of Trade, Margaret Beckett, told the festival that the growing number of contract staff had not been well-managed; their potential had "not blossomed as it should".

Instead, she noted, many such workers - whose contracts vary between two months and a few years - have given up science altogether or moved overseas.

Dr Tim Whiston, from the Science Policy Research Unit at the University of Surrey, said yesterday: "The particular problem that short-term workers face is that they haven't got any career prospects... A lot of contract researchers feel they are treated as second-class citizens." He puts the number of scientists on short-term contracts at around 5,000.

Anecdotal evidence also suggests that many people with science training abandon it and move to other professions which have more stable career structures and clearer promotion paths. Though Britain's universities turn out thousands of en-

gineers and scientists every year, companies frequently complain of a shortage of appropriate staff.

Even for those who stay in the business, the contract renewal process may also be counter-productive: Dr Whiston's research shows that people are more productive (in terms of papers published) in the second half of their contract than the first, irrespective of the length of contract. That means the settling-in period at the start of a contract is largely wasted - which implies that fewer changes of contract would be more beneficial.

Mrs Beckett said that a review is now under way to identify "best practice" in "managing and developing a valuable resource". She held up staff management costs, maternity benefits and long-term elements of contracts which should be borne by universities, not the researchers.

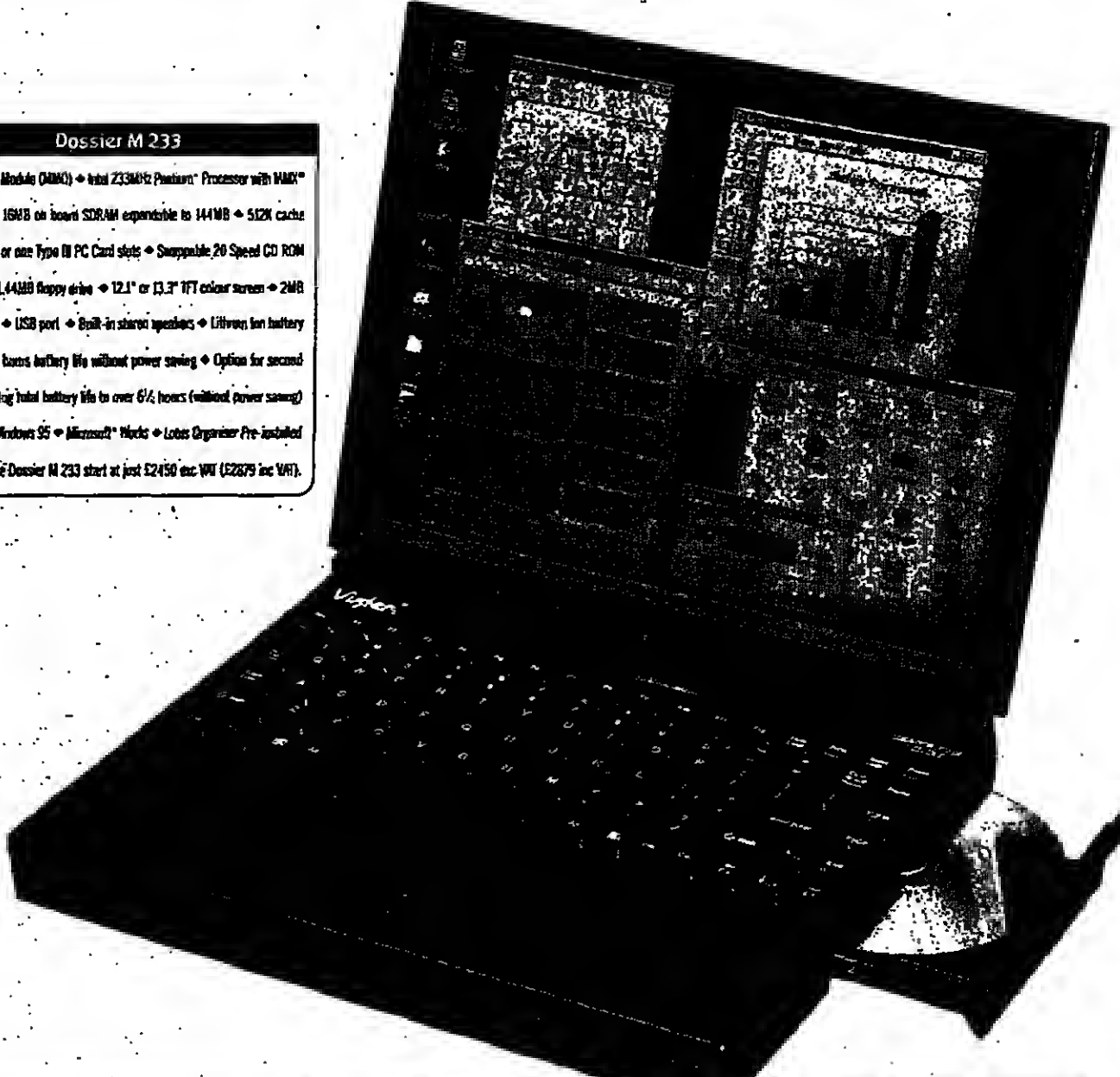
Dr Whiston said, "There are some possible benefits to contracting. It means you aren't tied to one area, as happens with academic tenure. It also encourages entrepreneurship." But he agreed that the disadvantages include the loss of crucial knowledge when people move out of science.

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politics

Blair will tell the TUC to modernise

Barrie Clement

Tony Blair today becomes the first prime minister for 19 years to address the TUC Congress. He does so amid demands that the Government go much further on union rights and after complaints from one of his ministers about public expenditure policy. Delegates to the conference in Brighton unanimously urged the legalisation of secondary action and full protection from the first day of employment.

Unions at Congress seeking legalisation of secondary action and greater employment protection

At a fringe meeting Michael Meacher, the environment minister, declared that he was "in considerable difficulties" coping with the Treasury's limits accepted by the Government and said that some areas were "trying our" for extra expenditure.

Mr Blair has registered his determination to keep most of the employment laws introduced by the previous government, including its ban on supportive strikes by one group of workers for another.

The Prime Minister's speech today is expected to call on unions to "modernise" and enhance their members' contribution to the economy through training rather than by relying on industrial muscle to improve their lot.

Supporting the motion for employment rights from the first day of work, John Edmonds, General Secretary of the GMB general union, said he "shivered a little" when he heard members of the Labour Government using words such as "flexibility" beloved of erstwhile Conservative ministers.

He said protection "from the first minute of the first day of the first week of employment" was a hallmark of a civilised society. Labour has abandoned such a pledge made by John Smith.

In his main speech John Monks, the TUC's General Secretary, invoked the name of Diana, Princess of Wales. He said trade unionists should attempt to capture something of the public mood generated by her death. "I hope that her legacy will be the flowering of a new compassion and caring people together in rejecting rampant, uncaring individualism," he said.

Meanwhile, Mr Meacher said that ministers were having to work with "the tightest spending controls in living memory" and he called the limits a "straightjacket". He said officials were preparing a law which would protect "whistle-blowers" who exposed employers for damaging the environment. He said the Health and Safety Executive should be able to draw up a law by the end of the year, but legislation was unlikely until November 1998-99. Those who exposed malpractice were putting their jobs at risk and should be protected from victimisation, he said.

The minister also announced the establishment of a TUC group on the environment to mirror an employers' committee already set up by the previous government.



Home run: Tony Blair in Edinburgh yesterday as campaigning for the polls on home rule for Scotland and Wales began again in earnest Photograph: Brian Harris

Wales warned: vote 'Yes' and create more jobs for politicians

Tony Heath

William Hague, a former Secretary of State for Wales, returned to the principality as leader of the Opposition yesterday with a strong attack on proposals for an elected assembly.

As the devolution campaign resumed with renewed intensity following an eight-day break, he warned people that they were being asked to buy a second-hand car without looking under the bonnet.

"Vote 'No' while you've got the chance," he urged. There was a great danger that an assembly would turn Wales into a semi-detached part of the United Kingdom. "It would be a disaster to set up an additional tier of government. It doesn't need an extra roomful of politicians to make Wales a success," Mr Hague said.

He conceded that if Wales votes for an assembly next Thursday his party would try to get in on the act. "If it [a 'Yes' vote] happened, Tories would stand for election to any democratic body in the UK," he told BBC Radio Wales.

Ron Davies, the Secretary of State for Wales, unveiled a list of 10 pledges said to offer Wales a brighter future. Some, such as the promises to cut class sizes and get young people off benefit and into work, echo Labour's gen-

eral election pledges. Others, including a commitment to represent both English speakers and Welsh speakers and to choose the brightest and best to stand for election to the 60-strong assembly, firm up the Government's promises to make the body inclusive and representative of the whole Welsh nation.

"The pledges show how Labour, working in a Welsh assembly, would create a brighter future for Wales, with more jobs, better schools and a better health service," Mr Davies said.

Sir Ray Powell, the veteran MP for Ogmore, declared that he would be voting "No". "I think it's a bit much to ask us to vote 'Yes' for proposals we don't know much about," he said.

Denzil Davies, MP for Llanelli, threatened to join the awkward squad, to which Llew Smith, the member for Blaenau Gwent already subscribes, because he alleged that Labour had broken an undertaking to make a home of Wales' myriad quangos.

The Secretary of State countered by pointing out the White Paper proposed the amalgamation of the economic trika of the Welsh Development Agency, the Development Board for Rural Wales and the Land Authority for Wales to form an economic powerhouse. The assembly would also have the power to abolish other quangos.

Howard says Brussels is threat to Nato

Anthony Bevis
Political Editor

Tory divisions over Europe were reopened last night by Michael Howard, the shadow Foreign Secretary, with a warning that Brussels threatened the nation state and the Nato alliance.

After the election of William Hague as Conservative leader, some moderate Conservatives said he had given them strong private assurances that they need not fear a further right-wing lurch against Europe.

But last night's speech by Mr Howard, to New York's Manhattan Institute, will bear out the worst fears of Tory left-wingers, who will publicly defy the new leadership if it insists on pushing such a strongly anti-European line.

Raising the spectre of individual member states being swamped by the federal ambitions of some European leaders, Mr Howard said: "The nation state must remain the basic building block of the European Union."

"People are naturally proud of their own countries. Politicians who ignore that pride and sense of identity do so at their own peril. To undermine institutions and ways of life which have developed over hundreds of years in the pursuit of a federal Europe would be the utmost folly."

On numerous occasions, senior Conservatives like Sir Edward Heath and Lord Howe have pointed out that the EU does not threaten the integrity of the nation state, national pride, or traditional ways of life.

But Mr Howard went on to warn: "Europe is not a nation, and it is dangerous for the EU to aspire to the trappings and functions of statehood while lacking real nationality."

"Its people speak 30 languages and dialects and vote for over 100 major parties. Trying to build new institutions or transferring wide-ranging powers from long-standing institutions to new ones will end in disaster if those new institutions do not have the wholehearted consent of those they are sup-

posed to serve."

Mr Howard also told his American audience that the most enthusiastic federalists also wanted to undermine the pre-eminence of the United States in the western alliance.

He said that if there had been a common European foreign and security policy during the Gulf war, there would have been a majority against intervention. "As an independent country," Mr Howard said, "the United Kingdom was able to send ground and air forces to the Gulf; as part of a European federation, we would have had to abide by the agreed policy."



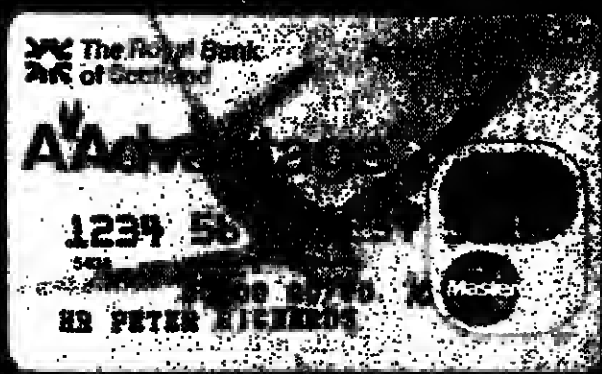
Howard: 'Federal Europe would be the utmost folly'

"The same is true of our support for other US military actions from the Korean War to the bombing of Tripoli and Benghazi in 1985."

Having posed the threat, however, Mr Howard said that he did not want to give the impression that anti-Americanism was "shared by all or even most" Europeans.

"It remains the case that most Europeans still see Nato as the basis of their defence and cherish their links with the United States. If we are to preserve the Atlantic partnership, with all its political, military and cultural benefits, we cannot be complacent."

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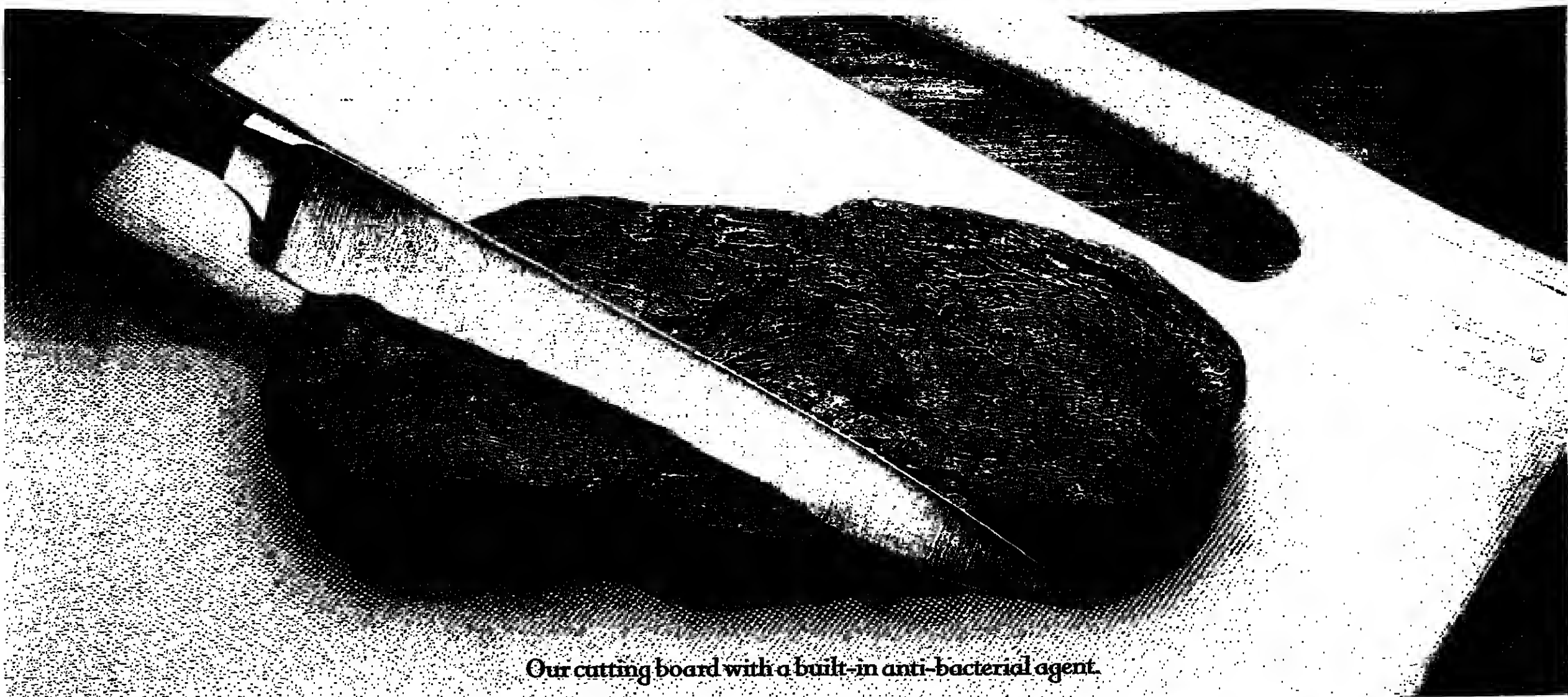
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international

West Bank raids pave way for Albright

Patrick Cockburn
Jerusalem

Palestinian security men with lists of suspects allegedly belonging to militant Islamic organisations went from house to house in the West Bank yesterday making the first widespread arrests since three suicide bombers killed five Israelis in Jerusalem last week.

The arrests come as Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, is expected to meet Madeleine

Albright, the US Secretary of State, in Jericho on Thursday. The US and Israel have demanded the mass arrest of suspected members of Hamas, the militant Islamic party, which claimed the suicide bombings.

As a fifth person died as a result of injuries received in the Ben Yehuda street bombing last Thursday, Israeli police tried to secure other potential targets, such as a covered shopping mall, from another attack while Mrs Albright is in Israel.

"We know that in essence there is an aim of torpedoing this visit," said Avigdor Kahalani, the Public Security minister. "What could happen is the same action - the kind of action - as happened last week."

In a message to David Levy, the Israeli Foreign Minister, Mr Arafat said he would "not tolerate violence and terror, committed either by Palestinians or Israelis." At the weekend Mr Levy had told the Israeli cabinet that he would not let them

abandon the Oslo accords, the basis for the current attempts to forge a peace settlement.

Some 35 people were arrested by Palestinian security yesterday, but there are unlikely to be the mass arrests of last year when 900 suspects were detained. Ziyad Abu Amr, a Palestinian legislator and a specialist on Hamas, said mass detentions without trial "are not feasible. Arafat does not want to see another Algeria in Gaza. People only swallowed the arrests last

year because they expected benefits from Oslo. [Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu is giving them nothing."

Hamas is taking advantage of the disenfranchised and cynical mood among Palestinians, says Mr Abu Amr. They believe the Oslo accords are dead and Mr Arafat's Palestinian Authority corrupt. He said: "The more Islamic Palestinians also have a genuine fear over the future of Jerusalem. It is being Judaized by the day."

Mr Abu Amr said there was no real evidence that the leadership of Hamas was divided between militants and moderates or between those inside the country and those abroad. It was also probable that Hamas is used to wage proxy war against Israel by Syria, Iran and others

"to send a message that there are limits to Israeli power". Israel has protested against what it says is a "revolving door policy" whereby suspects are arrested only to be released.

Human rights organisations say that in practice this means internment without trial accompanied by torture.

Israel is also demanding the extraditing of Ghazi al-Jabali, the Palestinian police chief, accusing him of ordering three Palestinian policemen to attack Israeli targets in July, though no one was injured. Mr Jabali said: "They [Israel] always use the theory of lies, lies, and lies, until they believe their own lies." He denies the charge.

Meanwhile, at a checkpoint near the entrance to Hebron, Israeli soldiers bound and severely beat a Palestinian yesterday and then fired tear gas when passers-by attempted to intervene, witnesses said.

According to them, Asraf al-Husseini, 20, was in his car when he was stopped by 15 Israeli soldiers. One bystander said the soldiers "beat him until blood started gushing out of his head, mouth and ears". The Israeli army was checking the report.

significant shorts

Ex-convict ups the ante for return of art works

Antiques dealer and former convict William P Youngworth III has raised his demands for help in solving the world's biggest art theft, a \$300m heist from Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in 1990. Youngworth, 38, said he now wants immunity from a variety of state charges. He already had asked for a \$5m reward. Youngworth has said that he and his friend convicted art thief Myles Connor can arrange for the return of the paintings, which include works of Rembrandt, Vermeer, Manet and Degas. AP - Boston

Court delays crucifixion

The crucifixion of two men convicted of murder has been postponed to allow for the gathering of a wider audience. A court in the United Arab Emirates has sentenced both men to crucifixion and execution. Maher Fakher Majed, an Emirates national, and Abdul Mahdi Mushtaq, an Iranian, both 28, were convicted of luring five victims into the desert, robbing them and shooting them to death. Abu Dhabi - AP

Far-right mayor sentenced

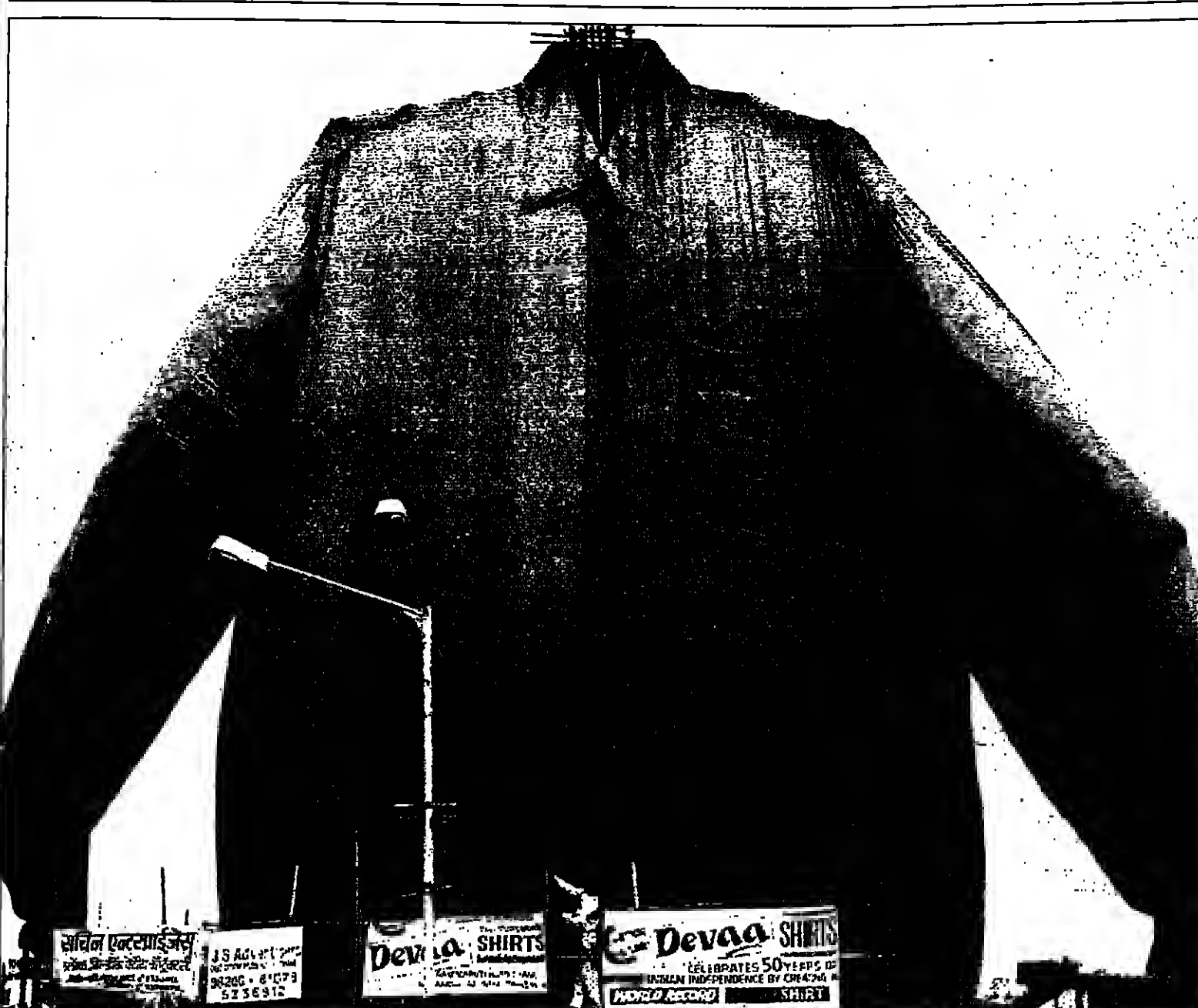
A French court gave Catherine Mègret, the far-right mayor of Vitrolles, a three-month suspended prison sentence for racist remarks made in a newspaper interview. The court rejected a prosecutor's plea that the politician from Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front party be declared ineligible to be mayor of the southern French town for having incited racial hatred in the interview with the German daily *Berliner Zeitung*. She called immigrants "colonists" and espoused racial inequality. Aix-en-Provence - Reuters

Elephants kill 7 in rampage

Wild elephants have killed at least seven people in south-eastern Bangladesh and injuring several others over the past three days. Witnesses said herds of elephants, protected under the country's wildlife preservation act, had thundered through villages trampling people, damaging crops and pulling down houses and trees. Dhaka - Reuters

Nigerian jets under fire

Anti-aircraft guns opened fire on Nigerian jet fighters circling Freetown's port yesterday as Sierra Leone's military government sought to counter a shipping blockade. Freetown, Sierra Leone - AP



Fifty-year stitch: A man is dwarfed by a giant shirt in Thane, a suburb of Bombay. The shirt, which is 50ft high, was made to mark 50 years of Indian independence and cost £2,500 to make. Photograph: Reuters

Dordogne rail crash kills twelve

John Lichfield
Paris

Twelve people died yesterday when a two-car diesel train collided with an oil tanker on a level crossing in the Dordogne area of France.

The tanker, carrying 30,000 litres of fuel-oil and diesel, burst into flames which rapidly engulfed the local train from Bordeaux to Bergerac and spread to a neighbouring house. More than 30 people were injured, some with serious burns. It took emergency workers several hours to free some of the injured from the wreckage. The train driver was among those killed.

Witnesses said the tanker was half-way across the unmanned crossing when it was struck by the train near Sainte-Foy-la-Grande on the border of the Dordogne and Gironde départements of south-west France. The tanker driver, who was seriously injured, told rescuers several times: "I didn't see the crossing came just after a difficult bend. Passengers who escaped injury spoke of panic as fire and smoke swept through the train's two carriages. 'The doors were jammed and we had to break the windows to escape,' said one man."

A preliminary investigation by SNCF, the French railways, indicated that the level-crossing half-barriers and flashing lights were working normally.

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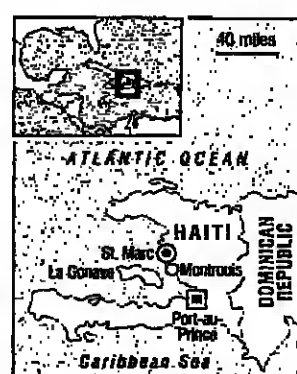
Haiti ferry disaster may have claimed 500 lives

Phil Davison
Miami

Up to 500 Haitians were feared drowned yesterday after an overloaded ferry boat sank off the Caribbean island nation's west coast.

The US Coastguard in Miami, which spends much of its time intercepting would-be Haitian immigrants trying to reach the United States on rickety boats, said as many as 800 people were thought to have been crammed aboard the ferry. The Coastguard, which sent a helicopter to aid local rescue workers, estimated that at least half of those on board had drowned.

A United Nations spokeswoman in the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince, said the death toll could reach 500, with most of the victims trapped in two



below-deck floors of the boat. UN peace-keeping troops, including two helicopters, were helping with the rescue effort and treating survivors.

The ferry was, in fact, a 60ft wooden sailing sloop with an outboard motor, carrying food from the mainland town of

Montrois to the island of La Gonave to return with vital charcoal used for heating and cooking by Haiti's six million inhabitants. La Gonave residents, workers or farmers pack themselves on to such boats along with livestock to seek work or earn a living in the Western hemisphere's poorest nation.

"For reasons we don't yet know, the passengers seem to have moved to one side of the boat and it overturned only 200 yards out," the UN spokeswoman said. "It had three levels and those below deck appear to have been trapped inside. There are few bodies floating. The waters off Montrois are extremely deep and we are having trouble locating the vessel."

The US Coastguard's spokeswoman said 64 bodies had been recovered and 60 people

were known to have swum back to shore.

Owing to overcrowding, ferry disasters are common off Haiti, a French-speaking republic which shares the island of Hispaniola with the Spanish-language Dominican Republic. The worst disaster so far was in February 1993 when the ferry *Neptune* sank about 50 miles west of Port-au-Prince with up to 1,500 people on board. The death toll was put at between 500 and 700.

Many of those who survived that disaster were found clinging to bags of charcoal or floating animal carcasses.

Yesterday, the ferry had barely left Montrois harbour at dawn when it sank. "You could hear people yelling for help," a local doctor said. UN officials said weather did not appear to be a factor.

Rabbit killer makes Japan's parents fear for children

Richard Lloyd Parry
Tokyo

The front page of the evening paper carried a specially drawn map showing the exact locations of the crimes, eleven small towns and cities scattered across the Japanese heartland. Kawachi, 30 May, seven killed. Shirol, 28 August, 15 killed, with a further eight found dead the next day, a few miles away in Inzai. Nearly one hundred brutal murders at 11 schools around Kanto, the broad plain of suburbs and commuter towns surrounding Tokyo.

Screaming headlines are not the Japanese newspaper style, but in this case the *Asahi Evening News* made an exception. "Butchered pets strike fear in Kanto region," read Sunday's front page: "Pet Rabbits in Peril."

Japan is famous throughout the world as a virtually crime-free society but not, it seems, if

you are a hunny. Since the end of May, 86 rabbits and seven chickens have been killed in nursery and primary schools all over Kanto. Some have been set upon by dogs, after their cages were deliberately broken into; others were beaten to death, dismembered or disembowelled by what looks suspiciously like an organised hit squad.

In most countries, the attacks would be considered nasty but inconsequential, and at any other time the same might be true here. But this has been an unusual and upsetting year in Japan, and recent events have endowed the hunny killings with a much deeper and more sinister significance.

The attack at the Motoko Minami Elementary School in Saitama Prefecture at the end of last month was typical: four out of the school's five pet rabbits were found with their throats ripped out by dogs, in cages which had been prised

open by a human hand. Understandably, the attack caused great upset among the school's pupils: their headmaster, Shigeru Hagihara, told the *Asahi* that he found them "eerily quiet" when he broke the news to them at the beginning of the new term last week.

The local police seem to have few clues and, in any case, cruelty to animals is not considered a particularly serious offence in Japan, where it can be prosecuted only as a crime against property. But the horror engendered by the attacks has less to do with what has happened, than with fear of what might come next. "With the string of murders and attacks on schoolchildren in Kobe," said Mr Hagihara, "attacks on small animals strike closer to home."

In May, Japanese public opinion was traumatised by the murder of Jun Hase, an 11-year-old Kobe boy whose severed head was found placed the

gates of his school. The following month, a 14-year-old boy was arrested on suspicion of the crime. It appears that the boy had killed at least two other schoolchildren. Police attention was drawn to him after he boasted of killing cats, whose severed tongues he carried around in a jar in his pocket.

Another notorious serial killer, a young man named Tsutomu Miyazaki, also tortured to death cats and dogs before embarking on the murders of four girls. Japan has long been vexed by worries about its children. The Kobe killings have prompted still more intense reflection, with anxious comparisons to the killing of James Bulger, and calls for a toughening up of Japan's juvenile crime laws. It has become impossible to see animal killings as just a sick aberration: the fear of teachers like Mr Hagihara is that whoever is killing rabbits today will tomorrow turn to children.



Japan's serial killer, Tsutomu Miyazaki, is shown in a mugshot.

international

Safety in space: US scientists raise nuclear power alarm as Russian space station hits trouble again

Fear of fall-out threatens voyage to Saturn

David Usborne
New York

The launch of a Nasa module bound for the planet Saturn, originally scheduled for early next month, may be threatened following claims that the US government is understating the risks associated with its nuclear power source.

The anti-nuclear lobby in the United States is mobilising itself to block the Cassini mission after hearing claims from a former senior Nasa official that an unforeseeable mishap with the module could shower parts of the Earth with radioactive debris that could threaten millions with cancer.

Alan Kohn, who was Nasa's emergency preparedness director for the launchings of both the Ulysses craft towards the Sun in 1990 and the Galileo ship to Jupiter one year earlier, was due to underline his concerns at a Washington press conference yesterday.

'If you keep launching these things, eventually you're bound to have an accident'

The focus of Mr Kohn's worries are the plutonium batteries that will power the Cassini as it penetrates deep space, far away from the rays of the sun that might otherwise have been its energy source. Altogether, the Cassini will bear 72lb (32kg) of plutonium in three batteries.

By comparison, the Ulysses carried 24lb (11kg) of plutonium and the Galileo 48lb (22kg). However, plutonium-based power cells have been built into scores of spacecraft, including satellites and Nasa's Apollo rockets. A battery from

Apollo 13 was lost on re-entry to the Earth's atmosphere and at present lies at the bottom of the Pacific Ocean.

Nasa is adamant that every precaution is being taken to eliminate possible scenarios where a disastrous failure could release the plutonium into the Earth's atmosphere. The batteries, for instance, are encased in iridium, a metal of extraordinary density.

Mr Kohn is not impressed. He told the *New York Times*: "Men and machines are fallible. If you keep launching these things, eventually you're bound to have an accident. It's inevitable."

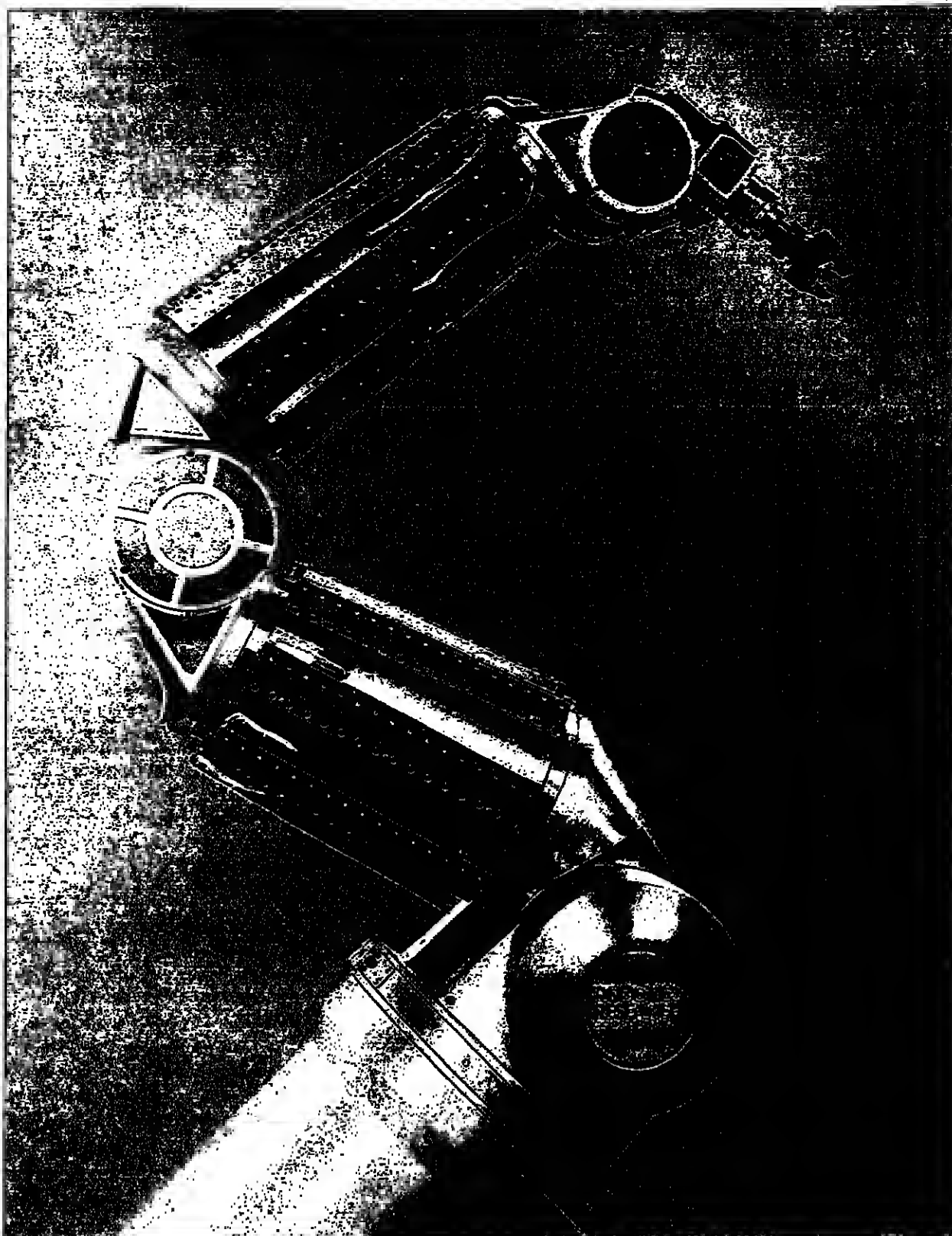
"Nasa says this whole thing is safe. Nobody can make such a statement. I've seen too many rockets blow up."

There are three moments during the projected mission that fire concern. There is the launch itself. That was set for 6 October, but has since been delayed because of a recent accident on the launchpad that damaged some of the craft's protective layer. That incident has itself rung alarm bells.

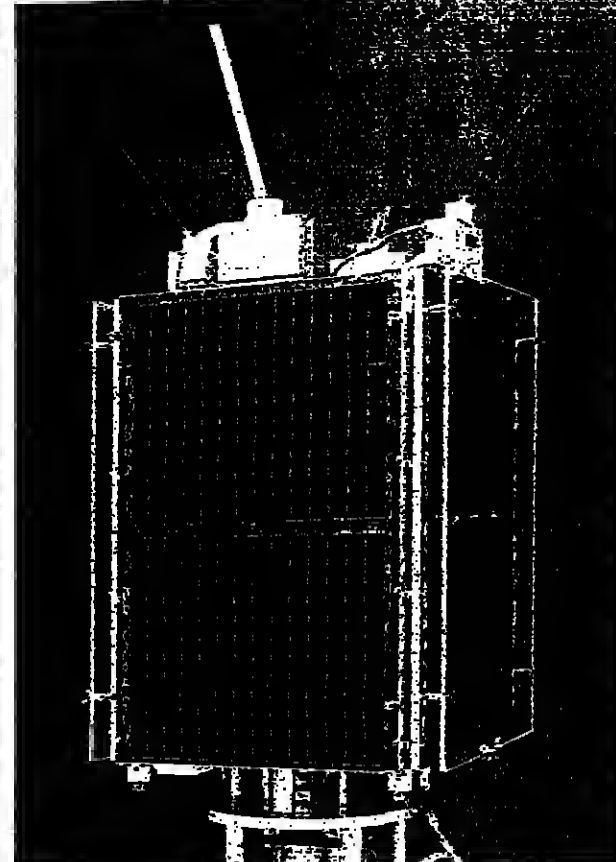
Thereafter, however, risk of radioactive pollution will remain during an orbit of Earth by Cassini and later, in August 1999, when it is due once more to fly close to the Earth's atmosphere.

Among those backing up Mr Kohn is Dr Michio Kaku, a physicist at the City University of New York. While Nasa has put 120 deaths on Earth as the worst possible scenario, Dr Kaku believes the number of deaths through radioactive exposure following a catastrophe could reach more than 200,000.

Anxious that Mr Kohn's campaign should not ground the \$3.4bn Cassini mission, the government is moving to offer counter-evidence. "Our safety analysis is two-feet thick," a spokeswoman for the Energy Department told the *New York Times*. "There is absolutely no accident sequence that results in huge amounts of plutonium being released."



'Emerging class': An iron claw at the British company UK Robotics; an image from *Deep Blue* Photographs: Peter Fraser



Sacred science: A communications device, photographed at the technology centre at Surrey University

Technology gets a deep blue tint

Peter Fraser's muse is technology, writes Kathy Marks. He spent three years visiting high-tech sites around the world, including Nasa's Johnson Space Centre in Houston, to photograph computers and machines.

Tomorrow sees the launch of a new book of his work at the Stephen Friedman Gallery in London, featuring 11 pictures that are at present on show in Cardiff, the latest staging post of a travelling exhibition.

Fraser isolates small mechanical sections, such as the robotic arm, from their normal context and sets them against vividly coloured

backgrounds in order to "invite a clear-minded reflection upon the technological sublime", according to the gallery.

Both the book and the exhibition are named *Deep Blue* after the chess computer that defeated the world champion Garry Kasparov earlier this year. The show is to move on to Cambridge and Carlisle later this year. Fraser describes his photographs as "portraits of an emerging social class", although humans never feature as subjects. He once said: "The sacred is everywhere, and resides in the most unlikely places."

Capricious computer shuts Mir down

Phil Reeves
Moscow

There have been many times when the astronaut Michael Foale has appeared to be living in an Arthur C Clarke story, but rarely more so than yesterday. The Briton and his Russian colleagues were compelled to shut down most of the Mir space station's systems because of what controllers called a "capricious" computer.

"Capricious" is not a word often used to describe space technology - unless, of course, referring to Hal, the megalomaniac fictional computer in 2001: A Space Odyssey. But, then, nor is "jinxed", although that is what Mir increasingly seems to be.

The breakdown was the third computer failure within three months, and is yet another addition to the station's litany of setbacks. These include a fire, a prang with a cargo ship, oxygen supply problems, and a Russian commander - now back on earth - who complained of a heart flutter.

At Mission Control outside Moscow, scientists were yesterday at a loss to say exactly why the computer abruptly turned itself off, after it declared an emergency and blacked out.

"The computer has become capricious again," said Valery Lyndin, a Russian spokesman. The crew promptly closed down most vital systems - including the oxygen supply system and gyroscopes that keep Mir aligned to the sun - to save power while they searched for the fault. Although the three cosmo-

nauts on board are not considered by their controllers to be in any danger, computer failure is among the more serious of the 1,500 (mostly minor) breakdowns that Mir has experienced during its 11 years in space.

When a crew member unplugged the main computer by mistake in July, it sent Mir drifting into space for about a day while the cosmonauts groped around the darkness with torches. There were further problems last month, when a computer section crashed during a redocking manoeuvre.

Yesterday Pavel Vinogradov, Mir's engineer, said that this time Mir was maintaining its position; power and oxygen reserves were reported adequate.

Last weekend, Mir's controllers had hoped to stem the tide of mishaps and bad publicity by announcing that they had found a hole in Spektr, the science module damaged when a cargo ship crashed into it in June. After a space walk that lasted nearly six hours, Dr Foale and Anatoly Soloviyov, the sta-

tion commander, returned without having found a puncture (although they managed to realign two solar panels).

Yesterday's events will inevitably contribute to Russia's increasingly defensive posture over Mir, as questions continue in the United States over whether the \$472m that Nasa is paying Russia for the use of the station is money well spent. Last month, Boris Yeltsin, needled by western media criticism, insisted that the laboratory was "alive and well".

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German growth gives boost to single currency

Inure Karacs
Bonn

Germany looks set to fulfil the most important Maastricht criteria for European monetary union, thanks to an unexpectedly strong surge in its economy.

The export-led recovery, expected to be confirmed by the publication tomorrow of the latest growth statistics, is pushing the German public deficit to within a whisker of the 3 per cent figure laid down by Maastricht. The introduction of new accounting techniques will also shave off a decimal point or two, and the government seems confident that what little flab remains above the line can be massaged away.

Bonn's perceived failure to deliver the magic number has been one of the most serious destabilising factors in the run-up to monetary union in 1999. Conversely, a German 3.0 will be regarded by financial markets

and European governments as a strong boost to EMU.

According to leaked estimates of the latest growth rate, the economy has been expanding twice as fast in the second quarter of this year as originally thought. In the light of these figures, analysts have been hurriedly upgrading their forecasts for the rest of the year. Instead of a 2 per cent growth rate for 1997, research institutes now expect the economy to expand by more than 2.5 per cent.

That coincides roughly with the government's estimate, which until a few months ago had seemed wildly optimistic. The difference in growth rate is just about enough to fill the state's coffers to the level required by Maastricht. There will still be a budget hole, but it should be small enough for a man with the creative genius of the Finance Minister, Theo Waigel, to fill.

The news gets even better next year. Helmut Kohl, the

Chancellor, has told his party that the economy will be growing by 3 per cent when elections are held next September. Much depends on this prediction coming true, but most economists agree with his assessment.

The bad news, truly rotten from the electoral point of view, is that the voters are unlikely to feel the effects of the recovery. Wages are stagnant, shops are barely surviving, and long queues are getting no shorter. There are 4.3 million Germans out of work - about 11 per cent of the working population - and very few of them expect to find a job in the near future. Those who still have a job are terrified of losing it. Shopping sprees are out.

The recovery Germans read about is taking place almost entirely within the gates of a few factories and outside the country's borders. With the once upwardly mobile Deutschmark on the slide, German exports

have rarely been so cheap - in Britain and the US. To domestic consumers the triumphs of Porsche in the US are of little relevance, however. The factories are not hiring, the construction sector is bust, and the public sector is cutting back.

For all these reasons, it is hard to find a German economist who is willing to be optimistic about the country's future. Those prepared to stick their necks out in this gloom are invariably found abroad.

The leading cheerleader is the Wall Street investment house JP Morgan, which last week broke ranks with the establishment by predicting that Germany's recovery will be sustainable.

The bank commended Germany for creating a "growth-friendly environment". Great news for the government, EMU, and German shareholders, in other words, but even this up-beat forecast expects no improvement in unemployment.

Car makers drive up profits

Inure Karacs

The joyful ringing of bells at German car factories heralds the renaissance of an industry once thought to be in terminal decline. In 1993, all but BMW posted massive losses. This year, every German-owned car concern is suffering from an *embarras de richesses*.

Porsche announced yesterday it had doubled profits in the financial year which has just ended, thanks largely to a 90-per cent increase of sales in the United States. Volkswagen-Audi has been increasing its market share throughout the world, and is ready to pour billions of deutschmarks into

Asia to take on the Japanese. Mercedes has turned a DM1bn (£350m) loss into a DM1.5bn profit within three years. It needs to build new plants abroad to keep up with demand. The new Mercedes A-class, due to be launched at the Frankfurt motor show later this week, has already been ordered by 110,000 customers.

By the standards of its domestic competitors, BMW's progress has been spectacular: sales up by a quarter in the US this year, and last year's profit at DM800m. The company's indifferent performance, however, is attributed not to the soaring costs of German labour but to problems at Rover, BMW's British subsidiary. The

expensive German workers turn in a 7-per cent profit on turnover, says BMW's boss, Bernd Pischetsrieder. At Rover the workers "do long hours, have low wages, yet the company is making a loss".

The success of the German car industry is attributed to massive restructuring carried out since the early Nineties. Some 200,000 workers have been sacked and the factories are slow to re-hire even in the boom times. Wages have been kept low, the turnover of models has speeded up and flexible working patterns imposed. However ossified the rest of the economy might be, the car industry demonstrates Germany can be reformed.

How to

Time to think again about the monarchy

مكتبة الامير

How to make the best of British science

The annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, taking place this week, is usually an extraordinary mixture of serious science and "gee whizz" trivialities, of leading-edge results presented by world authorities and obscure presentations by professors who emerge blinking like moles only to disappear again into their labs for ever more. The festival's eclecticism has grown. In recent years social researchers have leapt on the bandwagon. As a consequence we get reports of recent work by economists and sociologists; some of it will be interesting but difficult to relate, either in rigour, method or significance to zoologists' tales of talking seals or the latest from the Human Genome Project.

The BA is in short a baggy compendium and the note of sheer fun it often sounds is no bad thing. The extensive newspaper coverage, it generates reflects public interest, which goes beyond fascination with gimmicks and gadgets. It is tempting to conclude that, if this jamboree is any guide, British science is in fair shape.

Scientists themselves are unlikely to agree. For the BA is also their annual opportunity to plead for more money. This week we are going to hear again about the huge number of "alpha-rated" projects which get turned down by the Particle Physics and Astronomy or the Biotechnology and Biological

Sciences Research Councils. Margaret Beckett was invited to the BA yesterday not because she is especially interested in quarks and charms but because she is the scientists' paymaster, Labour showing no inclination to reverse the Tories' decision to place the research councils at the tender mercies of the Department of Trade and Industry. If past form is any guide, organisations such as Save British Science will announce doom is around the corner. Scientists have a point about the aggregate amount available for "pure" research but they are also in danger of exaggerating their case into incredulity.

There is a case for more money going into non-applied science – that is to say, the kind of science supported by the research councils – but it is one that needs to be made with more precision than the Royal Society and the British Association usually manage. The first thing to get over to the public is that nationalism is a very bad guide to science funding. British science is an oxymoron: knowledge advances internationally, the peer group of biologists and chemists in Cambridge or Newcastle-upon-Tyne includes Germans, Japanese and above all Americans. That is not an argument against national governments spending substantial amounts of public money on science. What it does say is that they and the scientists begging for grants need to recognise an international

division of scientific labour. Particle colliders and human genome projects are not the only science that only gets done by means of international cooperation.

It is no tragedy if Britain ceases to be represented at the top table in certain fields or disciplines. Scientists, it is true, do not have access to the kind of "free" public money represented by the stimulating flows of lottery money into the arts. Generally they cannot turn to business or the big charities such as the Imperial Cancer Research Fund except in utilitarian mode, proffering research that sooner or later will "work". But the case for public money for "blue skies" or theoretical work or

research that simply advances knowledge can only convincingly be put if they have done ground-work, political and opinion forming, in persuading public and parliamentarians that the large expense of keeping up with the leading edge in certain disciplines is a primary call on resources.

To be fair, the Royal Society did take the initiative; the resulting Public Understanding of Science programme has done good things – creating among other things some very effective science PRs. Science is well served by its cadre of specialist correspondents and popularisers who, generally speaking, cover the (simple science, complicated poli-

tics) Mir space station with as much aplomb as chaos theory. Indeed the idea that Britain is anti-science is hard to take seriously. Specific shortfalls in numbers of children coming forward to do physics A-level does not mean the end of the Enlightenment project as Newton knew it.

In that report on Britain's "brand identity", published yesterday by the Demos think-tank, much was rightly made of Britain's heritage of creativity, in science as in the arts. It is a tradition this government should foster, probably in excess of the £1.3bn already committed to the science budget. If Sir Ron Dearing's arithmetic is right, existing budgets need augmenting to the tune of £500m, a figure which in this season of (allegedly) comprehensive spending reviews ought not to be impossible to find. There is a quid pro quo from the science community. It is to lighten up and stop pretending that failure to fund all good projects amounts to intellectual vandalism. The fact is that science funding will have to get even more selective. The science community has to be prepared more over to engage the public and their political representatives in the debate over British strengths, and weaknesses. If we are good at, say, (expensive) Antarctic science should we pretend to be as good at oceans or tectonics? Scientists find these discriminations hard to accept. The week of the BA

may be a bad time to start, showcasing as it does all manner of cognitive wares. But at some point soon, if scientists are to succeed in their financial quest, the engaging and valued group who turn up at the BA's annual meeting will need to appreciate that their business is actually not the advancement of science generally, but the advancement of science in certain spheres where British endeavour and expenditure can add usefully to the global enterprise of expanding our knowledge of the physical universe.

The limits of decorum

Edwin John's reworking of his and Bernice Rapin's own song for the Princess of Wales's funeral service is one thing; but the prospect of a tribute album of specially composed material starts a quiver of unease. Among likely contributors to this Richard Branson project are Sir Paul McCartney and Phil Collins. These are decent people, with no doubt decent motives of raising money for charity. And the album will no doubt sell lots, and therefore help the Princess's favoured charities. But there is also a necessary point of restraint, and the showbiz world needs to be careful it does not cross the grey line.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Time to think again about the monarchy

Sir: You feature today (8 September) both the need for the monarchy to update itself and the need for the UK to present a different image.

Our first step as the British people should be to wean ourselves off the monarchy, which was an appropriate institution a thousand years ago but makes no real sense today. The Royal Family's first step is to recognise that it is the lack of any real role which is pushing it into becoming the public's soap opera and which is destroying the Family itself.

If I were the Queen, I would be looking at the wreckage of my children's marriages and the fact that my eldest son has now been cast in the role of demon pantomime King. I would also be asking myself how my grandson can ever have a happy life with the impossible hopes being rested on him and the obvious comparisons which will be drawn between his actions and those of his "martyred, saintly" mother.

If we need a head of state, then let us do what Ireland does and elect one. This allows the public to choose someone they like and respect. The person so chosen has volunteered and knows that they only have to endure the intense media interest for a limited period.

LESLEY ELLIS
Alton, Hampshire

Sir: We demand the impossible from the human individuals who constitute our Royal Family. We ask them to be simultaneously paragons of behaviour, taste, morals and style, and to be one of ourselves, the people. Try as hard as they may, they cannot win.

I am glad I did not have the misfortune to be born into British royalty. I value my freedom too much. I can choose to pursue a career as a night-club bouncer, a university professor, a comedian, an engineer or a priest. All that stands in my way is lack of will or ability. I can choose my religion. I can cycle solo from Land's End to John O'Groats, stay in youth hostels, or camp and back-pack. I can choose my friends and compete in the world fairly.

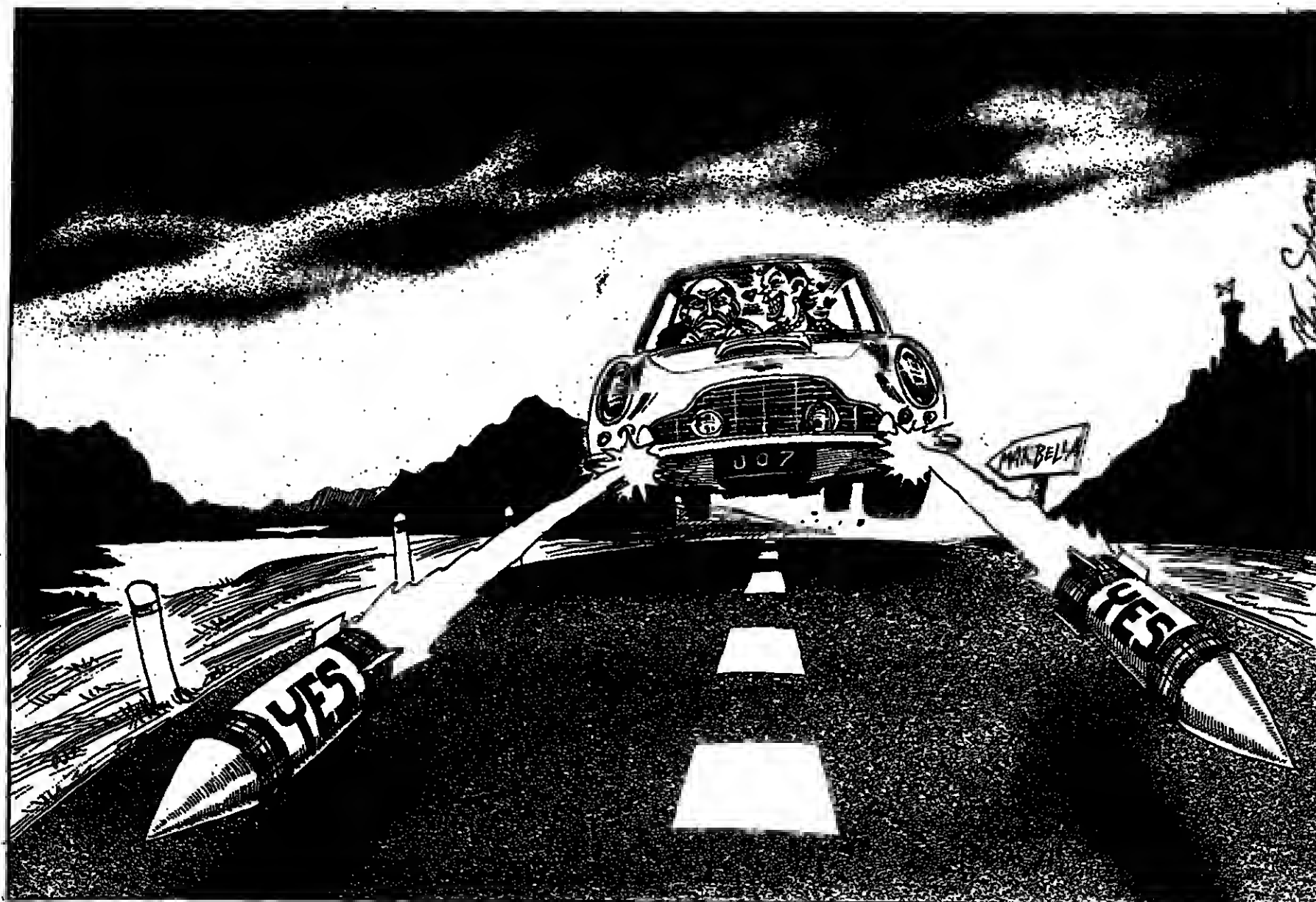
They cannot: even unfair advantage is a lack of freedom. If such restrictions were placed on any other group chosen by an accident of birth, there would be an outcry.

Let us give them sympathy and a break. Let us allow them to grieve in private, to make mistakes without being pilloried, to follow their own tastes, beliefs and inclinations, to bring up their children without repression. Above all, let us release them from their institutional prison by moving this country towards republicanism.

BRIAN DENVIR
London N21

Sir: Polly Ryntee, in her article "The last chapter of the royal fairy tale" (4 September), has encapsulated why this nation must progress towards a republic.

The Royal Family are at the pinnacle of the social elitism, privilege and class consciousness that so divides this country. All will that so divides this country, but take not be put right overnight, but take away the head and the body will surely follow, allowing the creation of a truly democratic society where recognition and esteem comes from one's own efforts rather than from a dynastic birthright and patronage. It is deeply repugnant that the country which gave the world



modern parliamentary democracy should still espouse a hereditary head of state along with the non-elected Lords who are part of the historical anachronism. However flawed they may be, at least politicians can be voted in and out of office.

The new millennium is the opportunity for Charles with draw the final curtain on kings and queens in this country. They are an outmoded institution struggling continually to find a role for themselves that no longer exists. Our heritage as a nation need not pass with them.

A ALLEN
Denbury, Essex

Sir: I recently showed a foreign visitor the sights of Britain, and I realised how (with pride), I had said that a particular building, or family or institution was so many hundred years old; and how precious to our nation.

We wouldn't dream of turning Warwick Castle into a shopping mall; how could we consider vandalising our national family?

Our Queen is the successor of all those colourful, boring, saintly, civil, mad or wise monarchs who gave interest and colour to our history, and whose names we adopt to describe our Jacobean, Edwardian, Elizabethan or Georgian treasures.

The character of a monarch is beside the point; the fact like she is the successor of William the Conqueror is very much the point. MARJORIE HEMBURY
Leicester

Sir: A British republic would be headed by a superannuated politician and no one else. Our politicians would ensure that

dismal future. I would rather defer to the remote Windsors than pay lip-service to some retired politico.

WILLIAM N LAITY
London SW5

Sir: The most fitting memorial to the people's Princess would be a republic.

SUE HARVEY
London SW12

Sir: Given the appropriate moment, when he has reached discerning adulthood, in the spirit of his compassionate mother – Long Live King William VI! KEVIN BERTINSON
Tynham, Kent

Media avoiding the blame

Sir: The manner in which the media have deflected blame from themselves to the Windsors is appalling. After Earl Spencer's eulogy on Saturday all emphasis was placed on his oblique and measured comments on the Royal Family, which contrasted so sharply with his scathing attacks on the media.

I'm disgusted by the disgraceful way in which the media and apparently much of the British public has turned on the Royal Family during one of their darkest hours. It's a very odd ritual to crucify the Windsors as some sort of sacrifice to commemorate Diana's death. If Britain wants to get rid of the monarchy, fine. Just

don't open the debate – which increasingly takes on the hysteria of a lynch mob – just after the mother of two of its members has been killed in an auto accident. The British public is either at the Queen's feet or at her throat.

BILL VIALI
London, W14

Sir: In your report "MPs back Earl's call to liberate princess" (8 September) you distort Earl Spencer's description of Princess Diana being driven "to fearful despair" and apply his words as criticism of the monarchy; they categorically were not, they were criticism of the press. The pious affirmation that intrusive pictures will not appear in your paper counts for nothing if you cannot respect words, which can be just as ill used as a camera.

GRAHAM R WILLIAMS
Biddenden, Kent

Flowers, but no real compassion

Sir: In the train yesterday (5 September) were groups of women holding bunches of flowers with notes of love for Princess Diana.

A young homeless man got on with his bundle of *The Big Issue*, the magazine of the homeless, and went round the carriage trying to sell his magazines. The women with their bouquets turned him away with never a word or a smile. I thought of Princess Diana and of how she would have reached out

to touch his hand, how she would have spoken to him and how she would have smiled warmly on him. If we have not learnt from the example of her life, then I fear our bunches of flowers are empty tributes to this wonderful, caring lady.

JEAN S HUMPHREY-GASKIN
Thornham Heath, Surrey

A London freed from the car

Sir: My husband had to attend the Abbey service. In the light of the media predictions about the descent of millions into London, and worried that the return trip to north London might be even worse than the morning one, he decided to travel on his bike.

Because of the absence of cars and the closure of so many roads, he found a London transformed. None of those many people who wanted to be in London had had any problem getting there. We have a transport system, particularly a bus system, that can accommodate crowds and deliver them in time if the roads are clear.

Free from noise and pollution, speed and danger, our capital seemed to be a dignified yet lively city worth spending time in, rather than a smoky web from which to escape as fast as possible on a sunny Saturday. Is it not time to make this state of affairs permanent?

JULIET SOLOMON
London N10

Poor way to love the Princess

Sir: So this is love? The nation flocks to mourn Diana and then forces her poor boys to appear in public – the one thing that would have reduced her to tears – and then we congratulate ourselves that we helped them get through the funeral by allowing them to be photographed the day before.

Poor little boys, they are at our mercy without their mother to shield them, and if that's not bad enough they have their uncle declare war on their father in front of billions of viewers.

Let's just get on with our own lives and let these boys live their lives. CHERRY MOSTESHAR
Oxford

Garden for Diana

Sir: A plan could be drawn up for a commemorative garden for Diana, Princess of Wales, in Kensington Gardens adjacent to Kensington Palace where thousands of mourners' flowers have already been placed. Such a garden might combine several smaller gardens and pavilions from all over the world to be representative of the breadth and depth of the Princess's international appeal.

A garden is a place of sanctuary and renewal. Such a garden within one of our Royal Parks would be a fitting tribute to a princess whose compassionate and strong will for her own healing and renewal were generously shared with those she found in most need.

JOHN SOMERVILLE-LARGE
London W7

Britain has seen a revolution

Sir: As I walked through Hyde Park at 6.30 on the morning of Princess Diana's funeral I was reminded of an early November morning in 1989 as I hurried with a BBC film crew to watch the first piece being removed from the Berlin Wall. I couldn't find any rational explanation for my feeling; in fact I was ashamed at comparing this profoundly sad occasion with the excitement of the East German revolution.

Then, as I sat with tens of thousands of people in front of the TV screens, thunderous applause broke out as the Union flag was hoisted to half-mast on Buckingham Palace. I recalled the scene on Wenceslas Square, when, in one of the first acts of defiance during Czechoslovakia's Velvet Revolution, someone climbed up onto the National Museum and hoisted a flag.

I am not in any way drawing a comparison between the oppressive Communist regimes of Eastern Europe and the British monarchy. But a new ethos was vindicated on Saturday – one which allows the heart parity with the head. It is cruel and unjust to vilify those who don't show their emotions as openly as Diana did. I was horrified at people baying for the Queen or the Princess to cry in public. But the cruelty of the Royal Family was that they sought to impose their values on Diana, the silent implication being that anyone who didn't maintain a stiff upper lip was weak and inferior. Diana made it OK for all of us to show vulnerability, to feel inadequate, to be frightened and insecure, to get it wrong – in other words, to be a human being.

Perhaps the events of last week will go down in history as Britain's Revolution of Tears.

Ms CHRIS CHARLESWORTH
London NW5

Protocol puzzle

Sir: Like many people last week I found the symbolism of the flagpoles at Buckingham Palace and Balmoral bewildering. Even now that I am aware of the protocol that produced these images, the intended meaning seems to have been lost to the nation.

Protocol is important because of the symbolism, the shared values and emotions which it can represent so well. But when the symbolism of the protocol is no longer widely understandable, the time has come to change the protocol and not to throw out the values and feeling underneath.

KRISTEN PARK
Dalrymple, Ayr

The true heroine

Sir: If God exists, he surely summoned Mother Theresa so that we could contrast her passing with that of the Princess of Wales. One died surrounded by the poor to whom she had devoted her life; the other in the company of a drunk and a playboy after a night out at the Ritz. One left two sons and washbowls; the other £20m and a lot of love for the Paris police. For whom am I supposed to shed the more tears?

KEITH SHARP
Timbridge Wells, Kent

In the stars

Sir: The comet? ROY D BOWDEN
Norley, Cheshire

essay

The little grey cells that shape modern economic policy have an unsuspected sympathy for the orderly world of sci-fi and detective novels. Diane Coyle probes the heart of the mystery

Economics, but not as we know it

Cross a hard-boiled private eye pacing the mean streets of Los Angeles in the 1930s with the inexorable rationality of Mr Spock on the deck of the Starship Enterprise. Picture a world peopled by the joint imaginations of crime writer Walter Moseley and cyber-novelist William Gibson. This weird hybrid will give you an idea of the cultural development of many economists, and, worse, of the intellectual context of much of economic policy.

Economics sometimes seems to dominate modern politics. The Budget is one of the main events in the political calendar. Economists are re-engineering the welfare state. We all bow at the altar of globalisation, at the whim of the gods of the financial markets.

Yet it is a little-known fact that many of the finest minds in the economics profession, those who shape the subject and form the next generation of policy-makers, are hooked on detective novels and science fiction.

These two genres between them capture the two essential aspects of how economists assume people behave, and therefore shape the world view that in turn underlies important public policies. For the towering skyscraper of economic theory rests on twin foundations, the assumption that people act to maximise their economic gains, and the assumption that they act logically.

First of all, people's actions are seen to be fully explained by self-interest. The world of economics is an amoral place. What we spend and save, whether we have a job, where we live, how long we stay at school, even who we marry, economics explains it all in terms of personal financial gain. It is a natural leap for academics whose idea of R and R is reading about the money-driven world of crime, whether seeking the motive in a country house murder or exploring the murky deeds of the mafia.

It would be hard to invent a more upright, Presbyterian sort of figure than James Mirrlees,

joint winner of last year's Nobel Prize in economics. Yet asked about his interests, in the blizzard of questions he had to brave on the day of the news, he said, without hesitation, that he spent his spare time reading detective novels. Significantly, perhaps, he was awarded the prize for his work on explanations of economic behaviour when there is incomplete information.

Whether it is grainy classics such as the novels of Raymond Chandler, the country house mysteries of Agatha Christie or Margery Allingham, or modern authors like Sara Paretsky, the conventions of detective fiction hold a special charm for economists. For the world portrayed in these novels is, contrary to surface appearances, an extremely orderly one. People's behaviour has explanations – motives. Like *homo economicus*, the characters in crime novels do not do anything for no good reason. They act in order to further their own interest. The link is clearest in the many novels where the culprit turns out to be the person with the strong financial motive.

Even more important, the fact that crime novels always have a resolution affirms the economist's attachment to the notion of 'equilibrium'. This notion underpins the subject's theoretical foundations. If there is no equilibrium, economists cannot predict how economies will behave. It is the idea that the separate decisions made by individuals add up to a coherent whole, that supply and demand will match. The alternative is chaos and unpredictability.

Similarly, classic crime fiction spurns randomness. The denouement is equivalent to an economic equilibrium. Like economics, crime fiction is not so much a mirror of the real world as a very stylised representation of it.

The powerful influence of crime on economic thought reached its apotheosis with the publication a couple of years ago of a textbook on *The Economics of Organised Crime*. The mafia runs a multinational business which differs from other

– mainly in having a higher cost base because so many of its activities are illegal. The bosses have to weigh up the extra costs of concealment and the risk of imprisonment when making investment decisions. But it is fundamentally no different from any other cost-benefit decision in the eyes of economists, and the theory is no different from that contained in any other economic textbook. To rub in the fact that to the economic mind crime is no different in essence from legal activity, one of the chapters is even called: 'Rival Kleptocrats: The mafia versus the state'.

This equation finds its fictional expression in Michael Dibdin's novels about inspector Aurelio Zen. After all, the equation might well be a fair one in the case of Italy. The series of Zen novels traces that country's political upheaval as a result of the exposure of the tentacles of organised crime and corruption.

Science fiction novels share with detective novels the context of a self-contained and profoundly ordered world. The worlds of sci-fi are worlds where you can imagine the laws of economics applying.

For the second key assumption economists make about human behaviour is that people are fully rational. They assemble all the available information, they consider the possibilities, and they make the choice that maximises their own gain. Mr Spock, the Vulcan first lieutenant in *Star Trek* (traditional Vulcan greeting: live long and prosper), is the ideal economic agent. The profession assumes that we all think like Vulcans.

Psychological studies have actually shown that economics students are more rational, or coldly logical if you like, than the population at large. Confronted with a series of problems, they far more often made the rational choice, the one that will maximise their financial gain rather than, say, making them most popular with their fellow students.

It is not known whether ferociously logical people are more likely than others to choose to study the subject, or whether absorbing its assumptions makes them more like the imaginary economic agents they study, but those who economists go on to project their own behaviour onto everybody else.

If proof is needed that economists are different from the rest of us, consider this description by an earlier Nobel Laureate, William Sharpe, of how he came to choose his speciality. 'At many points in my decision tree, fortune decreed that I should take the branch on this path rather than another. To get here, one must have the good luck to draw a great many favourable random numbers.' Perhaps the professor was being consciously ironic, but, knowing many economists, I can report that this is how

they really think. The voice of Mr Spock reverberates here.

Indeed, it is a voice that overlaps with that of some of the best-known fictional detectives. Remember Sherlock Holmes's injunction that when whatever is impossible has been eliminated, whatever remains, however improbable, must be true. Or the impossibly orderly Hercule Poirot's emphasis on his grey cells. One can easily imagine the little Belgian detective getting on like a house on fire with the Vulcan starfleet officer. They speak the same language. Characters like these represent the ideal of *homo economicus*.

However, it is from the hippest branch of science fiction, cyberpunk, that economics is drawing some of its fresh inspiration. Danny Quah is a London School of Economics professor who specialises in the economic implications of new information technologies. He turns to science fiction for creative thought about how the fully computerised world will look. High on his course reading lists are novels such as William Gibson's *Neuromancer*, Bruce Sterling's *Islands in the Net* and Neal Stephenson's *Snow Crash*.

This is not just a lonely eccentricity. A recent special issue of *Forbes*, the US business magazine, on the silicon rather than steel based economy featured a short story by Stephenson. And *Wired* magazine is fascinated by what has become known as the 'new economy', the post-industrial technological potential of countries like the US and UK. So is Federal Reserve Board chairman Alan Greenspan, a well-known follower of the sci-fi writer and ultra-individualist Ayn Rand, author of *The Fountainhead*.

Professor Quah explains that this kind of science fiction takes current trends in technology and society and extrapolates them to or even beyond their logical conclusion. The cyberpunk world is an extreme vision of how the world's advanced economies might look in a few decades' time. It offers clues to researchers trying to think about future economic trends.

He is upfront about borrowing ideas from science fiction. Others hide their debt, or are perhaps unconscious of it. But many of the vogueish, dystopian predictions about the prospect in

a globalised world of social tensions, extremes of poverty and wealth, and cultural uniformity – the emergence of the 'McWorld' feared by many academic opponents of globalisation – are direct descendants of this genre. Cyberspace represents the ultimate in globalisation.

For instance, the now-commonplace idea that multinationals are more powerful than governments? In fiction the idea dates back a decade. In his 1988 novel, Sterling has one corporate executive overrule a colleague with scruples about bypassing the rule of international law: 'A treaty is only a contract. You're talking like my grandmother. It's our world now ... Why work through governments any more? Let's cut out the middleman.' Somebody should tell the alarmists that this is still only fiction before they start pontificating about the dangerous new technology of beaming people up onto space stations and down again anywhere else in the world.

Critics of economics would argue that it is a serious matter that the profession whose influence dominates public policy is awash with *Trekkies* and people who fantasise about being Raymond Chandler's Philip Marlowe. And economists certainly have plenty of enemies who accuse it of being out of touch with reality.

They are wrong, of course. Their typical recreational reading is a useful source of inspiration for economists. I must end with a confession. I trained as an economist. I devour detective novels and have been a *Star Trek* fan since childhood. And I would argue that economics has a far more solid analytical foundation than any of the other social sciences precisely because of those weird assumptions about how people behave. They are not meant to be slavishly realistic, but to provide a powerful means of interpreting the world and making testable predictions. After all, every discipline draws strength from cultural sources, and uses metaphors in its interpretation of events. Science and crime fiction are a lot more fruitful than gritty social realism.

The economic model of human behaviour is of course obviously incomplete. Any parent, for example, could tell you that they value their children far more than the future income they might one day derive from them. Still, economics achieves surprisingly useful results by visualising people as characters in pulp fiction.

From left: Hercule Poirot, Mr Spock and Sherlock Holmes – all three have the sort of calculating minds that economists imagine are shared by everyone in the world



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Little minds can have long memories

The oddest thing about *Mastermind*, the light-hearted quiz programme which has just gone to the attic to gather dust, is also the oddest thing about *Round Britain Quiz* and *Brain of Britain* and *A Question of Sport* and *University Challenge* and all the others, and that is that the word 'memory' is not used in any of their titles.

This is not a new observation, but it is one worth making now and then to remind us that the people who appear on these programmes are not brainless. They are not anything at all except people with good memories which have been force-fed full of facts with a single-mindedness which would be called cruel if done to geese. The titles of the programmes suggest that the contestants are being given some sort of creative challenge to actually do something imaginative, in a master-mind, brainy sort of way, but nothing of the sort ever happens. I don't watch much daytime television but I am dimly aware that there

are many programmes on television in daylight hours which ask people to do things like rearrange letters to make words, and that daytime TV audiences do sit around at home watching people in a studio rearranging letters to make words. This doesn't say much for the richness of life of people at home, but I will say this for the people in the studio: if you are given the letters G-B-E-I-R-V-A-E and are asked to rearrange them into a proper word (come on, readers, you have 30 seconds starting NOW!) and you do succeed in forming a word from those letters (come on readers, you have only 25 seconds left!), then you have made more intellectual effort than anyone who ever appeared on *Mastermind*, because contestants on *Mastermind* were never asked to think about anything. Only to remember.

This is odd, in a way, because there is something a little un-British about an emphasis on memory. American crosswords depend entirely on general



Miles Kingston

knowledge, as far as I can make out. If the answer to an American clue is a seven-letter name of a river, like Potomac, then the clue will often be 'River (?)'. The same is true of our quick crossword-setters, but give a name like Potomac to a proper setter and he will say, 'Ah! The first two letters are the name of another river! And 'mac' is to do with rain ... so the clue might be 'American river takes Italian river to raincoat' ... no, that's not quite right ... Ah, 'Potomac' is an anagram of

'camp too', so how about 'American river changes camp too'? ... No ... And if the answer to a clue is the word 'Verbiage' (which is the word I was thinking of above) then an American crossword will give the clue 'Wordiness (8)' but a British clue will be something a bit more tricky like 'Barge I've changed for hot air (8)'. I may be wrong, but I don't think the Americans even have the equivalent of our penchant for intricate crossword clues. Heaven knows what they would make of a programme like *Radio 4's The News Quiz*, which sounds as if it is a quiz about the week's news but is anything but, being mainly a chance for the panellists to make jokes about the news, the chairman, each other and our leaders. The questions are merely the pretext for this. But as it would sound a bit simple-minded to ask questions such as, 'What are the Scots going to be voting for next week?' or, 'Why is everyone upset in Calcutta?' they wreath the questions in camouflage.

For instance, in the edition

which went out on Friday 29 August, just before Princess Diana died (and which therefore contained the kind of jokes about her which people were making when she was alive, and which therefore was not repeated the following Monday), there was this question: 'Who was barred for saying the same again?' It sounds as if it is all about drinking. Therefore it must be about something else, and, as Jeremy Hardy spotted, it was about people who had been penalised for plagiarising other people's poetry. But you have to be crossword-minded in a particularly British way to find this sort of thing sensible, and I fear we are the only country in the world which does so.

A reader writes: Well, if we are all so clever and crossword-minded, how do you explain the popularity of pub quizzes which are all about memory and nothing to do with cleverness? Miles Kingston writes: I was just coming to that.

Continued some other time, probably tomorrow.

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What happens if the Scots vote yes and no?

After the West Lothian question and the Gaza question, the Gordon Brown question: How come the Scots are apparently delighted to have a Scottish chancellor running their tax affairs from London when they aren't at all sure they want one doing the same thing in Edinburgh?

As referendum day creeps ever closer, so do the opinion poll findings on whether the voters want their own parliament to have tax-raising powers. About two-thirds of them want the thing established, apparently, but one poll at the weekend suggested only around 45 per cent want it to be able to change the basic rate of income tax.

So, the possibility of a yes-no vote on Thursday has become a real one. The Gordon question must be answered. (For those who have forgotten, the West Lothian question is the one about how Scottish MPs get to vote on English matters when the English can't vote on Scottish ones. The Gaza question is about how an Englishman living in Scotland gets a say in the referendum while a Scot living in England doesn't.)

There is still every chance of a yes-yes vote, of course – at the last count there were still more in that camp than any other. But it is time to ask why support for tax powers seems to be faltering.

The leaders of the Think Twice campaign will tell you that a tax-raising power would be bad for Scottish business; that it would drive companies south of the border. What they are really saying, though, is that these companies would be forced to follow the talented Scots who would leave in droves rather than pay more for a better road system or shorter hospital waiting lists.

A yes-no vote this week would be a sign that while the Scottish people have embraced the romantic notion of devolution, they have not even begun to come to grips with the reality. After all, the tax-raising power on offer – 3p either way on the basic rate of income tax – is an extremely limited one. If it were levied in full, someone earning £15,000 per year would pay £17 per month extra in tax. Besides, the parliament could put taxes down rather than up if it chose to do so, and in any case it would probably not do anything to them at all before the next general election. Even this, it seems, could prove too much for the cautious Scots.

So, what will they get if they cannot bring themselves to risk paying a few pounds more each month for better public services? They will get a body which, in one crucial respect, has less power than the local council with which Tony Blair famously compared it. A Scottish parliament with no tax-raising powers would have to argue its case with Mr Brown if it wanted more money for schools. But if Strathclyde Council wanted more, it could simply put up the council tax. To a further humiliation, the parliament would be able to hand down new tax-raising powers to local authorities while barred from making such charges itself. Thinking about a tourist tax? That will be one for the Highlands and Islands. Holes in the school



Fran Abrams

A no vote on the tax question would mean that Scotland's desire for a grown-up political system would be thwarted, and it would be left with 'not my fault' playground rhetoric

rooms in downtown Dumfries? How about a local rainproofing tax?

The taxless Scottish parliament would still have a number of significant powers, of course. It would have control of the health service, schools, housing, the environment, sport and agriculture. It would be responsible for both civil and criminal justice, and it would control economic development along with financial support to business and industry. But it would not have any control over its own purse-strings. The parliament's main job would be to receive a sum of money from Westminster each year and to decide how to distribute it. If more money was needed for housing, hospitals might have to suffer. If tougher anti-crime laws were on the agenda, money for new prisons might have to come from the education budget.

The flip side of these restrictions would be that the MSPs, or Members of the Scottish Parliament, would be left with a perfect scapegoat when their electors complained. Perfect, of course, because it is all too familiar: blame the English. If there isn't enough in the pot, it will be Westminster's fault. In fact, it will be Gordon Brown's fault. So the answer to the Gordon question, in short, is that the Scots won't be so keen on a London chancellor when they realise his decisions are binding their hands.

One yes-yes campaigner said yesterday that a no vote on the tax question would leave behind it nothing more than a talking shop – and a talking shop with a £40m start-up price tag to boot. But it would be worse than that. It would quickly become a little nest of resentment against the Treasury, with Labour figures joining their opposition colleagues in condemning government spending decisions. This could only mean that Scotland's desire for a grown-up political system would be thwarted. Instead, it would be left with the 'not my fault' playground rhetoric that has characterised it for so many years. In response, the English would probably wonder aloud why their taxes continue to pay for public spending north of the border at 14 per cent above the UK average.

Once the deed is done and the parliament is up and running, there is no way back. If its limitations lead people to see it as impotent and resentful, there will be only one way to put things right: to go on towards greater independence. That, of course, could mean a belated decision to go for tax-raising powers, or it could mean something more. On the other hand, it could mean hobbling on indefinitely with neither real power nor real respect.

All these arguments come to nothing, though, when compared with the central question that Scotland will answer on Thursday. Do the Scots really believe they can run their own affairs? All this boils down to is a simple issue of democracy. For years, people north of the border have been complaining of taxation without proper representation. Surely now the time has come for them to accept that they cannot have real representation without the possibility of taxation.



One of the photographs shown last week in Perpignan, France, at an event celebrating 10 years of 'Independent' photojournalism

Brian Harris

Pictures worth taking

by Andreas Whittam Smith

No snatch pictures of celebrities can be seen at the ninth Festival of Photojournalism being held at Perpignan in south-west France, which ends on Sunday. This is a meeting place for true believers in photojournalism, for practitioners who situate themselves on the line that began with Fenton's pictures of the Crimean war and runs through Cartier-Bresson to Don McCullin (who has an exhibition opening at the Barbican in London this week) and onwards. The young photographers who tour the café tables in Perpignan looking for picture editors to whom they can show their work have been shooting in slums rather than in Mayfair, in Kabul rather than Paris: they have been taking pictures of tanks, not of chauffeur-driven limousines.

The qualities they need are the polar opposites of the skills of the paparazzi. The first of these is empathy with the subject-matter, whether it be as a Russian war photographer, Pavel Kassia, describes the victims of conflict in Russia's rebel border territories – "how tragic was their submission and how docile they accepted their fate" – or the soldiers – "on either side I saw the faces of desperate men, ready to die, with no regrets". "Neither group", he added in his introduction to his exhibition, "could extricate itself".

But the most remarkable product of empathy at Perpignan is a set of pictures taken by a 12-year-old, Heloise Elber, of her twin sister, Morgane, who suffers from muscular dystrophy. A professional photographer had come to do a story on Morgane and was persuaded to leave his camera behind with Heloise. Her photographs are precociously good, partly because they are taken with love. Contrast this with the paparazzi. Perhaps it is too strong to say that they hate their subjects, but whatever the

relationship is between the hunter and the hunted, there is no empathy in it.

The second quality on display at Perpignan is courage. The reporters and photographers – and TV camera operators – who cover the news from the world's trouble spots need to be more brave, in some ways, than the police, soldiers or rebels whom they find there. Their sole protection will be a flak jacket. They will probably have needed the say-so of the government to reach the point of conflict, yet they mustn't be seen as stooges.

glory. It requires disguise, deception, secrecy, the bribery of people with access to or knowledge of the celebrity in question.

I do not want to argue that the only good photojournalism is pictures of war, poverty, cruelty, squalor. As well as the searing sense of outrage that often propels photographers into this kind of work, there is a gentler desire simply to express a point of view. Andreas Feininger, who was a *Life* photographer in the 1940s and 1950s, had a clear objective: to use his camera to explain what made America

upheaval. Many of his pictures succeed but one in particular is in my mind as I write. It shows a man crossing a street, with flood water up to his shoulders, smiling cheerfully, carrying a battered sewing machine, still dry, to safety.

It is not so much the paparazzi that threaten this sort of photojournalism, guilt by association, but a wider phenomenon of the late 20th century: dumbing down. The growing appetite of newspapers and magazines for lifestyle features and celebrity coverage leaves less room for

embracing couple. In an unworthy way, the protesters seem to be saying to the bailiffs, hang on a moment while we kiss, then you can remove us. Please do things in the right order!

For photojournalists the issue is not whether a single, snatched picture could be worth £100,000, but whether they can earn any sort of living. The money available for their work has declined. Perhaps the demand for paparazzi pictures will now suffer a setback, a "temporary correction" in the language of stock markets. But proper photojournalism, as I choose to call it, finds itself in a long bear market. Quite a lot of the work on show in Perpignan, the best there is, will never be published. Even the top of pictures which won the top competition of the year, the World Press Photo award, went unseen for many months – though the subject-matter is injuries caused by land-mines photographed in Angola close to where Princess Diana went to see the horrors for herself.

Yet even in the best time photojournalism finds itself on the edge. Newspapers and magazines are inevitably dominated by writers and they do not really admit the power of pictures. They believe too easily that TV does the best pictures, not understanding that a "still" picture has a special quality, the moment frozen in time, which can have an eloquence of its own. Photojournalism is to journalism as poetry is to literature, a noble form, yet neglected.

The qualities photojournalists need – empathy, courage, trust – are the polar opposite of the skills of the paparazzi

When injured they have no back-up forces to rescue them. These are not the risks run by paparazzi as they sit behind their cameras, waiting at a safe distance for their victims to walk on to the deck of a boat, or on to a beach or on to the tarmac of an airport from which private flights take off and land.

Then there is a third quality, or skill, required of good photojournalists. They will often find that to earn the trust of the people they are photographing, Andrew Lichtenstein, whose interesting set of pictures taken inside America's prisons is on show in Perpignan, says that "I had to be the invited guest of the warden. But I never wanted to be perceived by the prisoners themselves as working for the prison administration. Being honestly interested in the lives of the prisoners required a lot more diplomacy than photography." How different are the skills needed by paparazzi. Their trade is bur-

impressive to people seeing it for the first time. Anybody who has been to the US surely remembers his or her first glimpse of the New World. As I flew across the Atlantic in my late 20s, I feverishly tried to imagine what New York would be like. In the airport I quickly came across a typical newspaper stand and then a food counter; ah, I thought, somewhat prematurely, this is really America, this is what it looks like. In his picture of the crowds in Fifth Avenue on a bright morning 50 years ago Feininger miraculously captured the freshness and exhilaration of one's first images of New York. Steve McCurry's recent pictures of India have a similar sort of aim. He wants to show a land where death and ageing are neither feared nor resisted, but expected; where cataclysm is not something you only read about or see on TV, but is so close, it is almost welcomed, whether it be monsoon or civil

photographs that do more than merely illustrate an accompanying article, but which are strong enough on their own to communicate or to interpret events. There was a good example of this power in Brian Harris's picture on this page. It was originally published in *The Independent* to show bailiffs removing protesters from a house that was due to be demolished to make way for a motorway extension. The photograph is surreal, with its juxtaposition of the grim agents of the state and the

Sorry, but there is no simple truth

Since it seems to be open season on blaming the media, and as editors up and down the land are wearing sackcloth and ashes, maybe I should make my own modest admission. Let me therefore say here: the media's coverage of science is gently misleading from now on. We are not you, dear reader. We are not giving you the whole picture. Even our blanket coverage of this week's British Association for the Advancement of Science, at Leeds University, will omit important aspects of the science on show.

But surely science coverage is one of the few areas in all the media where facts are clear, where one can be sure that bias will not intrude? Not so. One of the most consistent sounds that will be heard this week, and any other week, is of scientists trying to get them to say "We know that..." when the scientist will only say "The evidence suggests..." or "Further research might tell us if it's correct that..."

For example, yesterday morning Professor Roy Harrison, who works at the University of Birmingham's Institute of Public and Environmental Health, was asked after his lecture on "The Urban Atmosphere: Composition and Consequences" to say where the best place was to live if you have asthma – the countryside, or the city?



Charles Arthur

The media comforts the public with the suggestion that science proceeds in a realm of facts and certainty. Scientists know that it just ain't so

It seems like a simple question that modern science should be perfectly equipped to determine. We can measure ground ozone levels. We know what sorts of things trigger asthma. So what did the professor reply?

He adjusted his spectacles and said, "There's no simple answer." He explained that ground-level ozone (which can trigger asthma) is actually higher in the countryside, because the nitrogen oxides emitted by car exhausts destroy ozone near the point of emission (the city) but help to generate it further away (the countryside). But other aspects of city living may make it hazardous for asthma sufferers too.

"In fact, the Department of Health is very cautious about whether to tell people to stay indoors on days with high ozone levels," Professor Harrison explained. "Should asthmatics stay inside, where there might be house mites which could cause an attack? Trying to turn complex ideas like that into comprehensible, instructive soundbites for non-scientists leaves experienced journalists feeling as if they have spent an afternoon wrestling well-soaped cello. It is not at all like dealing with politicians, who purposely use language to obscure their motives and aims, but not accomplishments. Nor does it resemble the treasure hunt of investigative journalism, the

pursuit of facts and events that someone has purposely kept hidden. Rather, it is a world where the city of scientific proof merges into a hinterland whose border is marked "Don't know".

Professor Frank Close, of the Daresbury Laboratory in Oxfordshire, and one of the most articulate particle physicists in the country, describes the moment in 1967 when he found himself at that border. "The first day I started as a research student my professor said to me, 'Before today, everything in the textbooks was definite and known. After today, you'll never feel as happy with the work and the results you get. You will always feel it's not as true as the work of Pythagoras and Archimedes.'"

But what now feels strange, Professor Close comments, is that "things that I have experienced over the years as uncertainties, things that are confirmed, students today now read as definite in their textbooks." The process of science has turned the unknown into the indefinite, and then into the definite – the known.

That is what you tend not to hear about the process by which the uncertain becomes the understood. If you like, it is a bias against misunderstanding, since people can so easily take scientific dispute to mean that the whole edifice of science is flawed. Derek Roberts, the out-

going president of the Association, said last week: "I don't think we want to portray debates in science. It could undermine public confidence in science." You will not find any sessions about scientific uncertainty at the BA this week; you have to recognise it in the way that answers are hedged with "evidence suggests" and "we're fairly certain that".

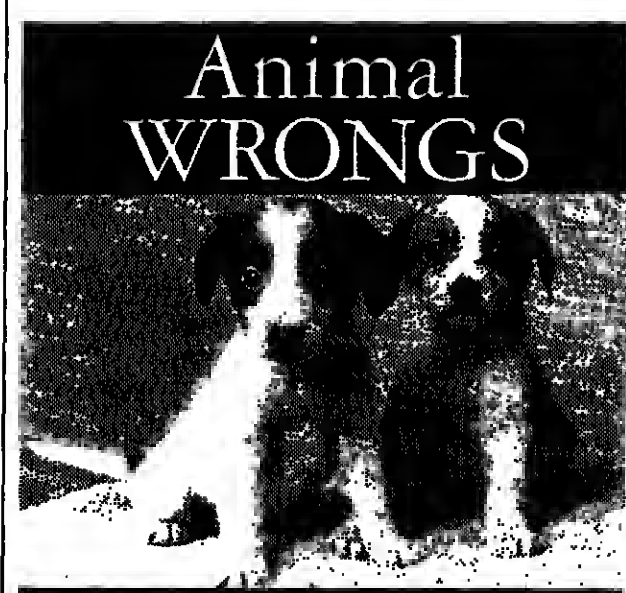
Yet with all that science can offer – from subatomic particles to the Big Bang – it still seems perplexing that first, we must represent it as offering certainties that it actually does not provide; and that with so much proven science, many people prefer "parascience" such as astrology, crystal healing or claims of alien abductions.

"People are looking for certainty," Professor Harrison noted. "But the press has a lot to answer for, especially at the lower end by peddling as near-certainties things that are actually very uncertain." The trouble is, humans love it. Our highly developed ability to reason – discerning cause and effect – means we will seek it even when it is not there. Superstitions emanate from that ancient need to control what we cannot understand. It is so deep-rooted that scientists spend years learning the procedures drawn up over centuries that will erase that fallacious seeking for certainty.

But what about the non-

science, the "pseudoscience" and "parascience" that so many people are moving towards amid the pre-millennial tension? Personally I find it hard to believe that anyone bothers with horoscopes now, surely the events of the past week have shown that they are utterly useless for forecasting the future. Equally, I was certain enough before last week of the absurdity of the "Bible Code", which claims that when analysed by mathematical techniques, the original Hebrew version of the Bible predicts all the significant events of the 20th century. The fact that the *Daily Mail* had to delay by a week the publication of extracts from this absurd trash, because of a sadly unpredicted accident, should put the wrap on it.

But I know that it won't. People will still want to believe in the unbelievable. Frank Close recognises it, and sounds indulgent when he considers the fact. "You know, I sometimes wonder what would happen if, for example, science actually proved that there was something like, say, ESP. You know, experiments that said how strong it was, when it worked and when it didn't, so we knew it all. You know what? All those people who believed in it when it wasn't science wouldn't then shift their belief over to the science of ESP. They'd move onto something else that science hadn't got to yet."



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obituaries / gazette

Mobutu Sese Seko

Mobutu Sese Seko, President of Zaire for 32 years, was black Africa's longest reigning head of state. Tall, imposing, never without his trademark leopard-skin hat and cane, he was the supreme example of a paramilitary chief. He embodied the state but was far removed from the economic disasters and political upheavals of his long-time subjects, eventually angry subjects.

An unwavering advocate of personal advantage at the expense of the masses, his arrogance and excessive greed expressed the worst of Africa. Yet it was these signature traits which ensured not only his own survival, but that of Zaire. His politically astute and manipulative personality dominated the 200 different ethnic groups who live in this slab of jungle and savannah the size of Western Europe. Throughout most of his regime his rule, an exercise in political cynicism, was propped up by the United States, France and Belgium.

Mobutu's chief tool for maintaining supremacy over this Congolese heart of darkness was money. He embezzled the country's coffers to the point where his unverified fortune was thought to be upwards of £3bn, roughly equivalent to the national debt. Zaire's large reserves of copper, cobalt and diamonds should have made it one of the most prosperous African countries. Instead, because he regarded the nation's minerals as his personal property, it is ranked next to Haiti in terms of human deprivation.

Joseph-Désiré Mobutu grew up poor, the son of a cook for a colonial magistrate. His mother worked as a hotel maid. He was expelled from the missionary school he attended for disciplinary problems and in 1949 was conscripted into the Force Publique, the colonial Congolese army. As blacks could not become officers, he only achieved the rank of sergeant-major, working as a clerk in the accounts department. It was a grounding which was to serve him well in later years.

At 25 he left the army to visit Belgium and, back in Kinshasa, became editor of *L'Avenir* and then *Actualités Africaines*, the radical paper launched by the pro-Soviet Patrice Lumumba.

Thanks to his impeccable networking, at the age of 29 he was appointed army chief of staff by Lumumba, who was made Prime Minister at independence from Belgium in 1960. Five years of anarchy and bloodshed ensued during which Lumumba was murdered. Mobutu survived unscathed having shrewdly judged that the Americans were interested in Zaire's copper and cobalt and were therefore worth cultivating.

The relationship was cemented in 1965 when he seized power in a CIA-backed coup. The CIA station-chief in Kinshasa, Lawrence Devlin, became his confidant and entrée to Washington. From Richard Nixon through to Ronald Reagan, Mobutu was welcomed in the White House as a special friend.

He prospered at the helm of a one-party state as a result of global power play. Despite his scandalous disregard for fiscal probity, he was doggedly courted by the West, particularly the US. During the Cold War, the Americans saw Zaire as a bulwark against the spread of Communism through Africa. In return for keeping his country's strategic minerals beyond the grasp of the Soviets and providing a conduit for American weapons supplied to the Unita rebels in Angola, his pilfering ways were, for the most part, indulged. For a short period the country moved forward thanks to \$2bn in foreign investment in mining and industry.

Mobutu soon established a one-party style of rule that could be likened to snakes and ladders. Government leaders were often arrested and tortured, but almost always stayed on the board. The conventional wisdom was that there were only 30 Zairians of note. Of these, 20 were ministers, 20 ambassadors, 20 in exile and 20 in jail. Yet, although he received occasional raps on the knuckles from Amnesty International, he eschewed the sickening cruelty of his fellow dictators Idi Amin and Jean-Bedel Bokassa.

At the beginning of the 1970s, he launched *Mobutisme*, which was a thin disguise for a personality cult of stunning egocentricity. He gave ethnic names to the geography of Zaire and ordered Zairians to follow suit under punishment of

a jail term if they failed to do so. Joseph-Désiré set the example by aggrandising his own name to Mobutu Sese Seko Koko Ngbendu wa za Banga, "the all-powerful warrior who, because of endurance and an inflexible will to win, will go from conquest to conquest leaving fire in his wake". He collected other titles such as "The Messiah" and "The Redeemer" and was referred to as "He" - with a capital letter - in government communications. He banned Western dress in favour of the *abacost* (*à bas le costume*), a Mao-style derivation of the pinstripe, to symbolise the break with colonialism. A public service announcement preceding the evening television news broadcast depicted him descending godlike from the clouds.

In 1973 he confiscated European concerns without compensation and the economy began to crumble as the copper bonanza soured and prices tumbled to a third of their peak value. In 1976 he invited the foreigners back but few accepted.

His continuing role as point-man for Western interests in Africa proved useful in 1977 and again the following year. Rebel invasions into the copper mining province of Shaba which left thousands dead, including over a hundred Europeans, were quelled with the assistance of the US, France, Belgium and Morocco.

During the first invasion, Mobutu despatched a contingent of pygmies to the front, but they proved useless as they could not see through the tall elephant grass to shoot their poisoned arrows. His gift for showmanship came to the fore after the second invasion when he personally piloted the foreign press to the front in an airforce C-130. He posed for photographs but made sure he was never pictured next to the massacred European civilians who lay piled feet deep in the notorious House of Death. Presenting the failed rebellions as a further example of Soviet expansionism, Mobutu then managed to secure nearly half the US aid budget for black Africa.

At this point Zaire's total collapse was only stayed by foreign troops and American bankers, who judiciously continued to lend in the hope they would

eventually see their money back. Mobutu reluctantly agreed to a series of corrective fiscal measures which included giving Erwin Blumenthal, a retired West German banker, effective control of the central banking system. In 1979 Blumenthal concluded his stormy one-year tenure with the observation that, unless Mobutu ceased to use the central bank as his personal account, there was no hope for the country.

Mobutu's unassessing quest to correct the unfortunate circumstance of an impoverished childhood eclipsed any development. Malnutrition beset 40 per cent of the population, and at times inflation ran at 71,000 per cent. He presided over a kleptocracy, expecting others to live by his ethic of grab what you can where you can.

His conspicuous consumption was unparalleled even by an African yardstick. He owned a chateau in Belgium, houses in Brussels, Venice, Paris and Abidjan, a Spanish castle, a luxury yacht, a Portuguese ranch and Swiss chalet and the Villa del Mare on the Côte d'Azur which had a cellar created to store 2,500 vintage wines.

But his true home was a Versailles-like palace where he became a virtual recluse in his later years. It was sited in ornamental gardens overlooking a northern bend of the Zaire River in his native village of Gbadolite. There was a casino complex and a chapel commemorated to his mother where a choir trained by a Belgian Jesuit sang Gregorian chant.

The nine children by his two wives were ferried to school in helicopters, taking off from a runway that was large enough to accommodate the wide-bodied jets he appropriated from the national airline to go abroad on shopping sprees. On vacations in Europe and the US with an entourage of up to a hundred, he could spend at the rate of a million dollars a week.

It was in the marble halls of Gbadolite that he held court in baroque splendour - gold cutlery, Limoges china and, of course, his favourite Taittinger champagne - making sure that dignitaries such as the former UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali were kept waiting for hours.

After the fall of the Berlin

Wall the Americans counselled early retirement, but their advice went unheeded. Instead, he gave a token nod to the wave of multi-party democracy sweeping the continent, allowing over 100 parties to form but making it clear their existence should not challenge his power.

In 1996, while he was undergoing treatment for prostate cancer in Switzerland, the holocaust in neighbouring Rwanda spilled over into Zaire's eastern Kivu Province. Out of this emerged an old enemy of 30 years' standing, an ethnic Tutsi called Laurent Kabila, whose rebels moved into an administrative vacuum to seize a large swathe of territory. Apparently abandoned by his old Western allies, Mobutu used his chequebook to sign on white and black mercenaries.

When he returned to Kinshasa in December of that year, he was welcomed home by a dancing, singing crowd of more than 100,000. It was a measure of the man's majesty that, although he was so obviously the engineer of the decay and ruin around him, they greeted him as their saviour.

Mobutu fled before Kabila's tattered army in May this year, first from Kinshasa (the day before Kabila's Alliance of Democratic Forces marched in) and then from his Gbadolite palace. Separated from the nation he embodied, his authority evaporated and he was shunned by the rest of the world, including France. After much negotiation, King Hassan of Morocco gave Mobutu and his 50-strong entourage asylum on compassionate grounds. The health of the ailing former dictator deteriorated rapidly and he was admitted to a military hospital in Rabat on 1 July.

Vainly glorious even in exile and sickness, Mobutu Sese Seko failed to live up to his boast that he would never be a former president, only a late one, even though he was ultimately felled by disease rather than the wrath of the people he had oppressed for over three decades.

Mary Anne Fitzgerald

Joseph-Désiré Mobutu (Mobutu Sese Seko), politician: born Lisala, Belgian Congo 14 October 1930; President of Zaire 1965-97; twice married (nine children); died Rabat, Morocco 7 September 1997.



Mobutu: a corrupt and vainglorious dictator who styled himself 'the all-powerful warrior who, because of endurance and an inflexible will to win, will go from conquest to conquest leaving fire in his wake'.

P. H. Newby

P. H. Newby was one of those rare writers (like C.P. Snow, Wallace Stevens and Roy Fuller) who managed to combine a demanding life as an administrator with a prolific output of creative work, and who, like them, rigorously kept apart the two strands.

Over 50 years, beginning in 1945, he published 20 novels, a book of short stories, two short fiction collections for children, critical work (including his British Council pamphlet *The Novel, 1945-50*), and much reviewing of fiction for the *Lancet* in the late 1940s, and three books on Middle and Near Eastern history. Some of the novels were very highly praised, *Something to Answer For* winning the first Booker Prize in 1969.

For almost 30 years, 1949-78, he was employed by the BBC, beginning as a talks producer, going on to become successively Controller of the Third Programme and Radio Three, Director of Programmes (Radio), and finally Managing Director, BBC Radio. He once said that he devoted nine-tenths of his energy to the BBC, but made sure that he got away from London to his home in Garsington, Oxfordshire, as soon as that work was over, giving his evenings and weekends to his own writing.

Percy Howard Newby was born in 1918 in Crowborough, Sussex; he was amused to recall that the nursing home in which he was born had once been a Roman bath. His father was a baker. He went to Hanley Castle Grammar School, Worcester, and would like to have gone on to university; but (as he put it in his character Oliver Knight, in *A Step to Silence*).

Once it was plain that he lacked the few hundred pounds necessary to put him even through a provincial university then it seemed quite natural for him to apply for admission to a training college which charged no more than £24 a year for both tuition



Newby: 'a fine writer who has never had the attention he deserves'

and residence. It was little enough but all he could afford. Newby went to St Paul's College, Cheltenham. After a brief period of school teaching, he was called up into the RAMC, served with the BEF in France, 1939-40, and was then sent to Egypt, where he was a corporal stretcher-bearer with the Eighth Army until just before El Alamein.

Nineteen forty-two was a

turning-point in Newby's life. He was seconded by the Army to be a lecturer in English literature at Foad 1st University, and remained there until 1946. His experience of Egypt was crucial in him, and he drew on that experience intermittently for the rest of his life.

It made, he said, "a determinate impression": living in Cairo was like living in a human laboratory, in which there were

no inhibitions. Strangers asked who his parents were and how much he earned. Students asked him why he was not married, whether he was homosexual. (He said he was not homosexual and was engaged to a girl in England. He married in 1945.) The extravagances of Arab life, in which volatile feelings and a relish for rhetoric combine, fascinated him. The range of his Egyptian acquaintances, from members of the corrupt royal family to denizens of the pullulating slums, was wide. Everything was extreme, and he quietly revelled in the extremes.

Newby's first two novels, *Journey to the Interior* (1945) and *Agents and Witnesses* (1947), drew on these experiences, though both have imaginary settings: the Sultanate of Rasuka in the first, a Mediterranean island in the second. Both are interesting and skilful books, and they quickly established Newby as a novelist. He was given an Atlantic Award in 1946 and the Somerset Maugham Award in 1948. But it was not until his ninth novel, *The Picnic at Sakkara* in 1955, that he managed fully to bring his observation of Egypt into focus, in a book which is Newby's most successful and memorable achievement.

In it, Edgar Perry, a lecturer in the Faculty of Arts at Gizeh, is a decent but ingenious man, drawn without quite knowing how into the snail of one of his students, Muawiyah Khassali, who admires Perry with an often embarrassing devotion, and who at the same time becomes the agent of the Muslim Brotherhood engaged in kill him. Tragedy and farce perform an intricate minuet. Delicately, comically, Newby plots through this wonderful fiction, set in the Egypt of Farouk's monstrous regime, with a charm that is hypnotic.

By the time Newby published

The Picnic at Sakkara, he was not only an established novelist but had been for several years an established radio producer. On leaving Egypt in 1946, he had worked as a freelance writer for a few years. Then, in 1949, not so much for greater financial security but with the thought that he should enlarge his human contacts (being simply a writer can be a lonely trade) and learn new skills, he joined the BBC as a talks producer.

Newby credited Geoffrey Grigson with initiating the move: "He'd read a novel I'd written, thought well of it, and dropped a note to Talks Department with the consequence that I was invited to write and read at the microphone a short story. Which I did and this led to other broadcasting, book reviewing in the Home Service, for example, and then regular talks broadcasting on the Third Programme." On joining the staff of the BBC he was made "the short-story expert" in Talks Department.

By the time I first met him, in December 1954, Newby had extended his range beyond that. He was responsible, among other things, for *First Reading*, a "literary magazine of the air" which gave an airing to several novelists and poets who have since become well known; and also for *Literary Opinion* ("a monthly programme of comment and observation"). It was for *Literary Opinion* that Newby invited me - then an undergraduate at Oxford - to contribute a brief talk on "The Young Writer in the University".

I wrote my stipulated 900 words, and arrived at Broadcasting House in the usual studious garb of the day: tweed jacket with leather elbow patches, cavalry twill trousers. I was much chagrined to see that all three fellow speakers on the programme (among them

John Raymond, the rather louché deputy literary editor of the *New Statesman* at the time), as well as my hitherto unseen producer, Mr Newby, were dressed in almost identical dark suits.

Newby was short (shorter than me, which was a comfort), large-headed, and with something of the build of a well-turned-out jockey. He spoke quietly but firmly, and was kind in teaching me how to speak my script. (Years later, G.S. Fraser, an earlier novice, commented on the sort of advice he gave: "You must think in speech blocks, not in paragraphs or sentences," on how to modulate the voice, and how to address the microphone - as if it were an intimate friend not a public meeting.) The cup of tea afterwards, with my fellow speakers and Newby, marked my introduction to broadcasting, to a novelist I had not then read, and to a man who was, a few years later, to be one of my bosses.

By the time I began working as a trainee producer, late in 1957, Newby was about to become Controller of the Third Programme. In our professional dealings, I was always aware of two things: his quiet, precise defence of high standards, and his equally quiet, precise caution. Some of my colleagues put too much emphasis on the second of these in Newby, as if he were some sort of inhuman litmus placed between anything new and the noisy conservatory world out there beyond the microphone. I never found this so. I found he was a man with whom one could equally discuss heterodox things; and he could give way.

Newby's long years in charge of the Third Programme, and then - with the change of name and emphasis - of Radio Three, must have been draining. Kate Whitehead's *The Third Programme: a literary history* (1989) and Humphrey Carpenter's his-

tory of the networks, *The Emory of the World* (1996), say a good deal about this. Some of the anecdotes and judgments by former colleagues in Carpenter's history make Newby, in these jobs and in his later ones as Director of Programmes and Managing Director, sometimes sound like a cipher. Since I had left the BBC in 1965, I can't properly judge; but I doubt these stories' bias, just as I challenge the remark of Philip French (a very distinguished radio producer) that Newby "lacked levity". Newby's gifts as a "comic" novelist could also appear in his conversations and in his acts.

I think Howard Newby was probably glad to retire from the BBC in 1978. During the years since he joined the corporation, he had certainly made his mark as a novelist, publishing 13 novels between 1950 and 1977. The first Booker Prize, given to *Something to Answer For* in 1969, brought him renewed attention - though the Booker was not, as it is now, a high media event: I remember the then sales director of Faber & Faber, the book's publisher, telling me that the prize probably resulted in no more than about 400 extra copies.

Among the later novels, two strike me as among Newby's best. *Feelings Have Changed* (1981) is the one work of his which drew on his broadcasting experience. Written after his retirement (though no doubt he had kept earlier notes), it includes authentic fictional portraits of Louis MacNeice and of Laurence Gilliam (Head of Radio Features Department until his death in 1964); and - though its Author's Note disclaims any intention to write "a novel about the politics of broadcasting" - it is a subtle analysis of the difficulties of a large cultural organisation. His last published novel, *Something About Women*, came

into my hands in typescript when I was working part-time editorially for André Deutsch. This was in 1994; and by then Newby's publishing fortunes had been through various vicissitudes. In turn, Cape (his first publisher), Faber & Faber, and then Hutchinson, had dropped him. He seemed to be a faded forgotten name. But - not out of loyalty to his past work, or out of loyalty to him as my long-ago BBC boss - I recognised that this was a small masterpiece.

Something About Women is a wry, gentle, bemused, delightful novel, about affection, love, innocence, experience. By the time Newby's literary agent submitted it, Newby was tired and ill, not eager for face-to-face "hands-on" editing; but in fact the book required none of this, and our talks on the telephone and our correspondence were easy, firm and gentle as ever. The book's publication in 1995 was not spectacular: it had some warm and intelligent reviews, but it did not sell. This disappointed me.

Here, as Graham Greene had said many years earlier, was "a fine writer who has never had the full recognition that he deserves". I can only hope that - as so often happens - his death will soon bring him fresh recognition. P. H. Newby was one of the best English novelists of the second half of the century.

Anthony Thwaite

Percy Howard Newby, broadcasting administrator and novelist: born Crowborough, Sussex 25 June 1918; staff, BBC 1949-78; Controller, Third Programme 1955-69; Radio Three 1969-71; Director of Programmes, radio 1971-75; Managing Director, BBC Radio 1975-78; CBE 1972; Chairman, English Sage Company 1978-84; married 1945 Joan Thompson (two daughters); died Garsington, Oxfordshire 6 September 1997.

DEATHS

DRURY: James, suddenly on 5 September in Cyprus, aged 54. Much loved by family and friends and widely respected by colleagues worldwide. Funeral details still to be arranged. All donations in RSPB, Sandy, Bedfordshire.

WALKER: Louis Charles Vivian, at home on 3 September 1997. Beloved husband of Bea (father of Simon, Stephen, Catherine and Susan), grandfather of Jeremy, Gita, Ruby, Daniel, Judith and Louis. Funeral service at St Michael's Church, Highgate, at 4pm on Thursday 11 September followed by interment at Highgate Cemetery.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS. Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In Memoriam should be sent to write to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 3PL, telephone 0171-293 2011 or faxed to 0171-293 3010, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

Birthdays

Mr Richard Adams, former chief executive, P&O, 76; Miss Pauline Barnes, designer and book illustrator, 75; Sir Tom Cowie, life president, Cowie Group, 75; Professor John Davis, Warden, All Souls College, Oxford, 59; Sir John Gorton, statesman, 86; Mr Robin Hyman, publisher, 66; Sir John Lowndes, former MP, 72; Sir Anthony May, High Court judge, 57; The Rev Professor Norman Porteous, theological scholar, 99; Mr Cliff Robertson, actor, 75; Mr James Sabin-Clare, Headmaster of Winchester College, 56; Mr Richard

Sharpe, rugby footballer, 59; Mr Dave Stewart, rock singer and producer, 45; Dr the Hon Shirley Summerville, former Labour MP, 66; Mr Chaim Topol, actor, 62; Miss Margaret Tyrack, actress, 66; Air Commodore Robert Williams, 1 King's Secretary, Rugby Football Union, 77.

Anniversaries

Births: William Bligh, captain of the *Bounty*, 1754; Alexander Nasmyth, painter, 1758; Jane Ellen Harrison, scholar and archaeologist, 1850; Ralph Hodgson, poet, 1871; Max Reinhardt (Goldmann), theatre director, 1873; James Evershed Agate, theatre critic, 1877; Arthur Freud, popular lyricist and producer, 1894; James Hilton, novelist, 1900; Cesare Pavese, poet and novelist, 1908; Paul Gooden, novelist, playwright and poet, 1911; Beatrix Williams, 1 King's Secretary, 1887; James IV, King of Scotland, killed in battle at Flodden, 1513; Sir Humphrey Gilbert, explorer, drowned off the Azores, 1583; Tobias George Smollett, physician and author, 1721; Ombudista Frances, architect, painter and engraver, 1778; John Singleton Copley, historical painter, 1815; Stéphane Mallarmé, poet, 1898;

Roger Eliot Fry, artist, 1934; Mao Tse-tung, Chinese leader, 1976; Hugh MacDiarmid (Christopher Murray Grieve), poet and critic, 1978. On this day: San Sebastián, held by the French, surrendered to the Duke of Wellington, 1813; Allied troops landed at Salerno, Italy, 1943; North Korea was proclaimed a separate independent state, 1948; the first hijack of a British aircraft took place near Beirut, 1970. Today is the Feast Day of St Bertille, St Clarn or Kieran of Clonmacnoise, St Gorgonius, St Isaac or Sahak the Great, St Joseph of Volokolamsk, St Omer or Audomar and St Peter Claver.

Lectures

National Gallery: Anthea Peppin, "Back to School (2): old masters and young pupils, 1pm. Victoria and Albert Museum: Diana Perry Aldrich, "The 16th-Century Interior", 2.30pm. Tate Gallery: Stuart Currie, "Innocence and Death: The Graham Children by William Hogarth", 1pm. British Museum: Barbara Brend, "Mughal Palace Forts", 1.15pm. National Portrait Gallery: Peter Secombe, "John Angell James: leader of 19th-century Congregationalism", 1.10pm.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Princess Royal, as Honorary Air Commodore, Royal Air Force Lynton, opens the Help! Information, Volunteer Exchange (HIVE) at RAF Lynton, Chippingham, Wiltshire, as member, the Merchant House of Glasgow, visits the house and signs the Golden Book, West George Street, Glasgow; as Patron, Victim Support Scotland, launches VS 200 Campaign, James Moor Hall, Mitchell Theatre, Glasgow, Granville Street, Glasgow; and as Patron, Northern Lighthouse Board, visits three new lights, marking completion, on the west coast of the Hebrides. Changing of the Guard The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

سكينة الحارثي

Internet giants join forces in \$1.2bn deal

Cambridge-based UNIVAX, the first product to feature the technology, probably a mobile telephone, is to appear before the end of this year.

"We have taken a view on the technology and decided it has a chance," Lord Young said. "If it succeeds, it promises to be extremely profitable. I believe that within two years we will see quite a lot of revenues coming in."

CDT is also in talks with a large Japanese electronics company about licensing the LEP technology for use in a wider range of household products.

Unlike conventional LEDs, which are based on traditional semiconductor technology, LEPs can be fabricated on flexible plastic sheets and are claimed to be cheaper, thinner and lighter as well as being easier to read.

Blue Circle's prospects questioned

Blue Circle Industries, Britain's dominant cement producer, has been one of the better investors in a less-than-inspiring building materials sector.

Despite its heavy weighting towards two mature markets – the UK and US – the expectation has been that the cycle in both was on the upswing, while more exciting growth prospects could be provided by exposure to emerging markets, notably Chile and Malaysia. But yesterday's interim figures raised some question marks over future growth prospects.

The virtually flat stated profits of £117m for the six months to June hid a 22 per cent underlying advance, excluding the effects of a £25m charge for redundancies and write-offs associated with the long-term pay deal with UK employees earlier this year. However, the underlying picture is more mixed. Most concern yesterday centred on Malaysia and the well-publicised concerns about its economy. Although Blue Circle was doing its best to reassure the City that there would be no recession there, the outlook remains cloudy, and in the meantime the operations in Malaysia and Singapore are hardly firing on all cylinders.

A 6.2 per cent drop in profits to £16.7m in the first half, while volumes kept a quarter, was hardly impressive. BCI blamed the low-margin imports which it was forced to sell to meet demand and production problems. A new plant firing up next week could claw back as much as £10m of lost margin, but the economy needs to perform. Meantime, the Chilean market continues to suffer ahead of a big capacity increase due to be brought on by a competitor over the next two years. Competition has forced prices down by up to 7 per cent, cutting profits by 12 per cent to £18m, but they remain more than 50 per cent above those in the US, suggesting there will be more pain to come.

Even stripping out a maiden £15.4m contribution from St Marys Cement of Canada, acquired in April, underlying growth in North America was a chunky 8 per cent. The market there continues to go like a train, but it is hard to see this pace being maintained for too much longer.

The high operational gearing of the UK cement business means modest volume and price increases fed through to a handy 22 per cent jump in profits. But even if an upturn in the construction industry eventually feeds through to Blue Circle, imports will always act to trim some of the gains.

All of which helps explain why Blue Circle is keen to parade the £300m or more of firepower it has to buy new

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY MAGNUS GRIMOND

growth in emerging markets such as the Far East and Latin America. Even with Panmure Gordon downgrading its full-year forecast to £335m, the shares, down 7.5p at 395p, stand on a forward p/e of 14, which looks a fair rating.

Fairey suffers in electronics

Fairey, the specialist engineer, is a tough company to get to grips with. A whirlwind of acquisitions in the past year means that some 70 per cent of its business is now in specialist electronics – a shift from its traditional, lower-margin defence-related engineering. Unfortunately electronics has been a terrible investment.

Overcapacity and falling demand have rocked the semiconductor market. Added to crippling currency hits in certain areas of the market, electronic sector shares have underperformed the market by some 23 per cent in 12 months. Companies such as Eurotherm, heavily exposed to the semiconductor market, and Bowthorpe, a big exporter to Europe, have suffered

repeated profit downgrades. Fairey has been dragged down too. Shares in the group have lagged the market by 33 per cent in 12 months.

Fairey probably does not deserve to be lumped in with the rest of the sector but, given recent acquisitions, measuring the health of its underlying businesses is not easy. The group has spent more than £200m on four deals since January 1996. That, along with foreign exchange factors, makes Fairey's headline numbers meaningless.

After £2.1m of currency losses in the half year to June, operating profits rose 45 per cent to £26m as underlying sales rose almost a third. The figures included the recently purchased Burnfield operation, but were without Fairey's largest acquisition to date – Fusion, the ultraviolet coatings group bought for £81m last August – and PMS of the US, bought last year for £49m.

John Poulter, Fairey's chief executive, puts organic sales growth in the core electronics business at 6 per cent. That is decent enough when compared with rivals. Moreover PMS, which lost sales after the semiconductor slump, should pick up now that that market is recovering. If so, Fairey could hit 10 per cent organic sales growth rates by the year end.

With 60 per cent of its earnings in US dollars, Fairey is also less exposed to the pound than other companies and should see a smaller second-half hit.

Sue Cox at UBS forecasts £52m for the full year, putting Fairey's shares, unchanged at 567.5p, on a forward multiple of 16. That is a 5 per cent discount to the market which drops to 14 times next year for a 15 per cent discount. Fairey deserves better. Good value.

Sentiment keeps Brammer down

Brammer, the industrial services group which distributes parts for industry, has taken a beating this year along with much of UK manufacturing. After five years of steady growth, which has seen the shares climb steadily from 200p to nearly 700p, the stock has tumbled sharply in recent months. Yesterday on interim figures slightly ahead of expectations they rose 7.5p to 576p.

The main reason for recent weakness is sentiment, with investors fighting shy of industrial stocks which are exposed to the strength of sterling. A mild warning on industry earlier this year, prompted by a subdued UK manufacturing market, also knocked Brammer.

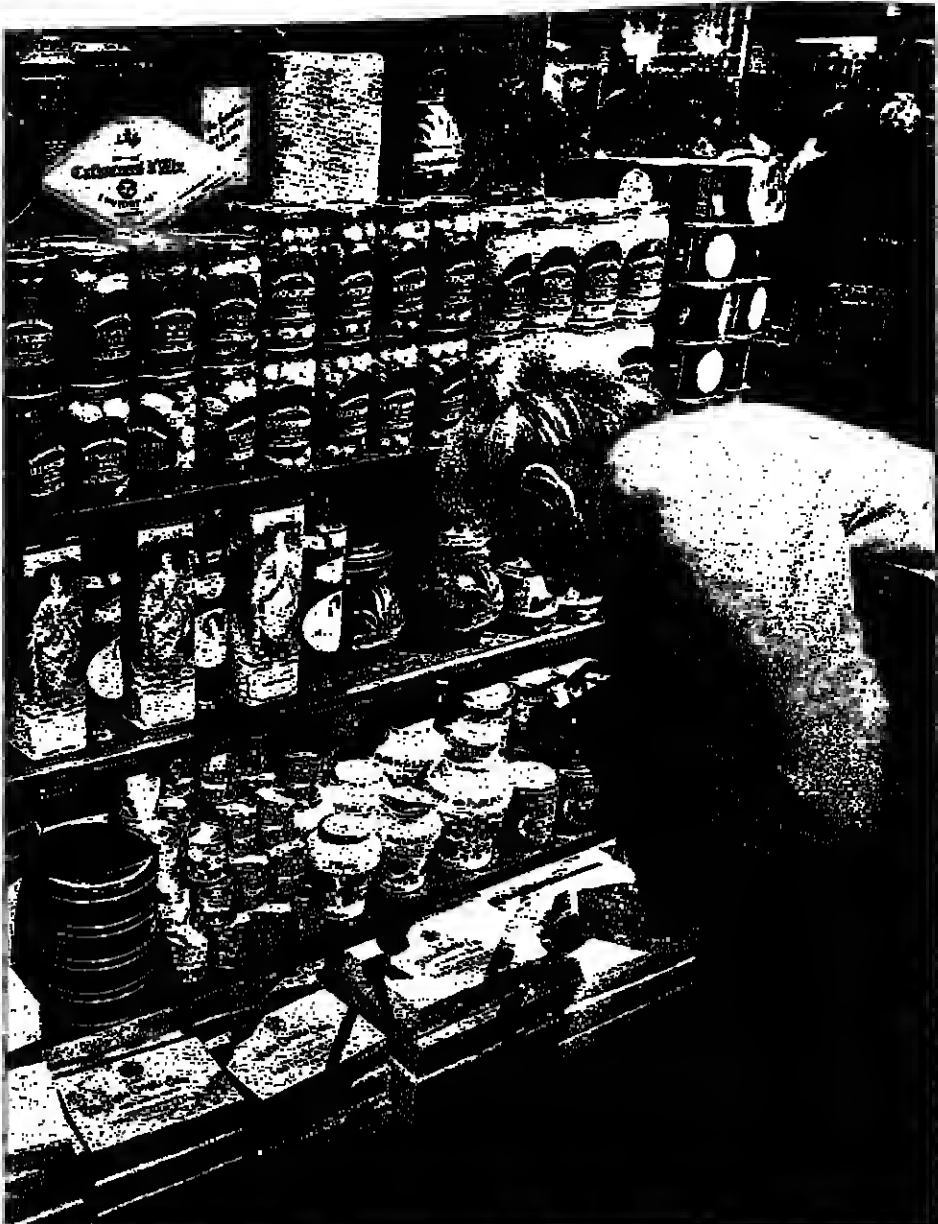
The fears may be overdone. On full-year forecasts of £30m, Brammer shares trade on an undemanding forward rating of 13. Yesterday's half-year figures showed the group had managed to make progress in spite of the hit on currency translation. Half-year profits were 10 per cent ahead at £14m, though the increase would have been 15 per cent without the hit from the pound.

Brammer's main business is distributing its range of 500,000 components to around 45,000 customers. The company's key strength is that although no single customer accounts for more than 1 per cent of sales, the company has managed to build significant market share in certain sectors. Distribution profits increased by 15 per cent, at constant exchange rates, though the European bearings market remains sluggish.

Livingstone, which rents out equipment such as industrial computers, did even better with a 19 per cent profit hike, even if Germany was weakened by the loss of a contract. But the second half has started better and Brammer feels the economy is strengthening.

Acquisitions are expected, although most of the deals in Brammer's sectors are with small, family-owned companies. Longer term the shares look reasonable value at these levels.

Profits flat at Fortnum as overseas visitors spend less



Fortnum & Mason (above), grocer to the well-heeled, yesterday announced a tiny £6,000 increase in annual profits to £5.23m for the year to 12 July. Garry Weston, chairman, said trading was affected by a fall in the number of overseas visitors and by reduced trading space on four floors at the store in Piccadilly, London.

He said difficulties were encountered during the complex underpinning and foundation stages of the building of the store extension, and the programme had been delayed. "This means we will not be able to trade the full extended ground floor this Christmas," he warned.

Mr Weston said the group's budgets, which were currently being met, called for an increase in underlying profit, but as they were based on the assumption that the UK economy remained buoyant during

the Christmas trading period, and that the pound did not continue to strengthen, it was too early to estimate the outcome.

In the year under review, departments such as wines, hampers and cakes achieved growth above 10 per cent as sales to local customers remained buoyant throughout the year. Menswear and ladies fashions also benefited from this buoyant trade.

However, Mr Weston said spending by overseas visitors fell by an estimated 20 per cent in the second half compared with the strong performance in the comparable period of 1996. As a result of the building work food hall selling space has been reduced by nearly 10 per cent since April.

Despite the flat profits performance, the dividend is being increased from 7.6p to 8.3p.

Kingfisher man to take Hamleys job

Nigel Cope
City Correspondent

Hamleys, the toy retailer, is expected to announce the appointment of Chris Ash as chief executive this morning, ending a year long search.

Mr Ash has been a senior director at Kingfisher for 12 years, including the last eight as board director at Woolworths and Superdrug.

Mr Ash replaces Geoff Cullinan, who quit as chief executive last October after just seven months in the job. Mr Cullinan had a background in consultancy and Hamleys said at the time that the group needed a retailer in such a key position. He was paid compensation of £142,000.

As part of the boardroom reshuffle, Stephen Woodbridge, Hamleys' managing director, will step down as an executive director. He will become a non-executive instead. It was felt that a company of Hamleys' size did not need a managing director as well as a chief executive.

Chris Ash will join Hamleys next month. He is a career retailer and prior to joining Kingfisher he spent 12 years with Boots, BAT and Argill.

Mr Ash's appointment completes a boardroom rethink by chairman Howard Dyer. In May David Fogel joined the board as a result of the £8.7m Toy Stack acquisition. Mr Fogel became merchandising and buying director.

Hamleys is keen to develop its brand but is wary of diluting the magic of the name, which is synonymous with the flagship Regent Street store. The company said the acquisition of Mr Fogel's 11-strong Toy Stack chain was a way of expanding into shopping malls and high streets without devaluing the Hamleys name. It is restricting that to airport shops and its flagship sites.

Hamleys shares have been under pressure this year. From 439.5p last November they have slumped to 239p in July. Yesterday they were unchanged at 297.5p.

Marks & Spencer casts eye over Latin America

Sameena Ahmad

Marks & Spencer, the high street retailer, is exploring the possibility of opening stores in Latin America as the next stage of an aggressive worldwide expansion plan. It will send a team, led by Chris Littmoden, executive director of the group's North American retail operations, into Brazil, Chile and Argentina in the next few months.

The team will also check out the Mexican market, though M&S said plans there were longer term.

The clothing group said it had opened its 10th store in Hong Kong at the weekend and planned to open another two in the region in the next 12 months. M&S, already the largest franchise store in South East Asia, also plans to expand in Indonesia and set up in Australia.

M&S's rapid expansion outside the UK is prompting Dewhurst, the retailer's second-largest supplier of men's and women's clothing, to follow.

Speaking at the group's half-year results to July, Tim Dewhurst said the company, which makes 88 per cent of its sales from M&S and supplies no other retailer, was planning to spend £50m in the next two years on warehousing and fac-

ilities, including two new factories in Morocco and a new plant in Indonesia which will make men's formal shirts.

Dewhurst has two factories in Morocco and sources from third parties in Indonesia. The three new factories, which should open within 12 months, are thought to cost around £4m each.

Mr Dewhurst said it was vital to move to where M&S needed it.

"We must be able to respond quickly. We work hand in glove with them. It's a real partnership," he said.

Dewhurst, one of the UK's best textile companies in a sector beset by falling prices, sources a third of its total output outside the UK, but reckons that proportion will grow to 50 per cent in three years.

Increased efficiency and higher volumes driven by innovations such as non-iron

fabrics left Dewhurst's interim sales up a fifth to £177m and margins 0.4 points higher at 7.8 per cent.

A spokeswoman for M&S, which, unusually for a UK retailer, has successfully built its brand overseas said: "Our ambition is to be a global brand. South America is in the early stages, but we have been sufficiently encouraged by an initial report to send a team there."

Scottish Media unlikely to seek early renewal of licences

Scottish Media, owner of the Scottish and Grampian independent television franchises, said yesterday it was unlikely the group would seek early renewal for its two licences as there would be no economic benefit.

Andrew Flanagan, managing director, said: "We think we are unlikely to go forward early unless there are good economic reasons for doing so and at the moment there is no evidence of that yet."

In July, the ITC released a consultation paper on early licence renewal whereby the ITV companies have the right to renegotiate new terms for their licences to apply from January 1999.

However, analysts forecast SMG could lose out by up to £8m per year when the licence terms are reassessed, which must be done at the latest before the current 10-year

licences run their course by 2002. The Scottish TV licence has one of the lowest fixed annual payments among all the ITV companies, paying an index-linked £2,000 each year while Grampian pays an index-linked £799,000 per annum.

Mr Flanagan's comments followed the release of the company's results for the first six months of the year to June which showed the pre-tax profits climbed from £10.3m to £18.5m, in line with analysts' forecasts.

He said the ITV network had suffered from lower advertising spend in the second quarter of the year due to competition from Channel 5 and a tough comparison period with last year when coverage of the Euro '96 tournament boosted spending by advertisers.

However, Mr Flanagan said the Channel 5 effect repre-

sented a "pause for breath" in ITV advertising spend rather than a long-term trend.

Advertising revenue growth is expected to pick up in the third quarter though the increase will be fairly small, he added.

At the group's newspaper division, advertising revenue growth had been virtually flat year-on-year as volume growth was affected by the group's efforts to improve yield.

"We have increased yield from press advertising by 14 per cent and now we are beginning to see volumes pick up even at the enhanced prices," said the finance director, Gary Hughes.

The ability, since the recent acquisition of Caledonian, to offer joint press and television advertising packages had boosted the advertising performance in the period, Mr Flanagan said.

"We've had a lot of success

with that [selling combined packages] mostly with press advertisers being introduced into the television area," he said.

He added that the group was on target to realise the £3m of cost savings from the integration of Caledonian that were flagged at the time of the takeover in October 1996.

At the half-year stage, £2m of savings had been realised, which was ahead of target for £1.5m in the first year from acquisition. A further 30 staff cuts would be made in the second half of the year, taking the total head count reduction to 80, around 10 per cent, since takeover.

The integration of Grampian, which was bought for £105m last month, has only just commenced, but Mr Flanagan said that having looked at the opportunities he was "comfortable" with analysts' forecasts for £2m of cost savings over two years.

Planning system 'pushing up land prices'

Magnus Grimond

Wilson Bowden, the Leicester-based house-builder, yesterday warned that delays in the planning system were leading to overheating land prices as the housing market picked up.

David Wilson, chairman and chief executive, said a major land shortage was pushing up prices. "They have gone up by 20 per cent over the past year, which is irritating because it is entirely due to the shortage created by the planning system, which we are powerless to do anything about."

He said there was absolute-

ly no reason why, after a planning inquiry had been held, it should take the minister 18 months to decide whether a development should be allowed to go ahead.

Mr Wilson called for local plans and planning inquiries to be speeded up.

He was speaking after his company announced a 68 per cent jump in pre-tax profits to £29.1m for the six months to June.

The interim dividend is being raised 10 per cent to 3.3p, from earnings per share 72 per cent ahead at 21.2p.

The strong results came on

the back of a 34 per cent jump in house sales, to 1,468, and an 11 per cent rise in the average selling price to £113,500.

Mr Wilson said the good figures were the result of a stronger market in the part of the country south of Northampton and the expansion plans put in place two years ago.

Forward sales for the second half are currently running 20 per cent ahead of last year and the company is ahead of its target of achieving 3,000 house sales by the end of 1998.

But Mr Wilson said he did not think the housing market was overheating.

"We would be surprised if there was a need for interest rate rises or anything like that," he said.

The figures included 160 sales by Trencherwood, the small house-builder acquired last year, against 250 in the whole of 1996.

There was also an £8.1m operating contribution from property development, up from £4.5m before.

The company is expecting a considerable increase for the full year as well, with further office developments in Sheffield and Nottingham to come through in the second half.

Company	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Admiral & Bond (F)	5.58m (4.13m)	1.45m (901.15m)	2.52p (1.75p)	0.5p (0.25p)
ASW Holdings (F)	228.8m (200.7m)	5.3m (4.18m)	-	-
Balfour Beatty (F)	5916.00m (51.7m)	5.32m (4.52m)	5.03p (5.18p)	-
Blue Circle (F)	1.12m (1.04m)	116.5m (116.3m)	11.8p (9.9p)	4.85p (4.25p)
Brammer (F)	111.5m (97.2m)	14.0m (12.78m)	21p (18.5p)	5.4p
British Vireo (F)	416.1m (477.2m)	32m (28.4m)	9.8p (7.7p)	4.25p (4.0p)
Chandler West (F)	-	10.88m (15.19m)	43.82p (65.58p)	5.0p (4.75p)
Cum gratia & Mills (F)	119.9m (119.9m)	14.37m (12.26m)	5.82p (4.87p)	2.15p (2.54p)
Dewhurst (F)	3.51m (2.63m)	537.67p (363.69p)	0.27p (0.15p)	nil
Fairly Group (F)	153.7m (118.4m)	23.96m (21.33m)	16.5p (15.5p)	3.05p (2.86p)
Ferret Parts (F)	44.75m (41.05m)	10.97m (10.2m)	19.1p (18p)	4.5p (4p)
Fortnum & Mason (F)	32.73m (32.04m)	3.23m (3.22m)	22.7p (23.7p)	8.3p (7.6p)
Gaskell (F)	23.85m (21.08m)	1.24m (233.00p)	17.5p (4.4p)	2.4p (1.6p)
Grampian Group (F)	262.1m (269m)	8.3m (4m)	3.8p (1.9p)	2.0p (1.5p)
Jules Haggard (F)	43.79m (44.67m)	2.22m (2.7m)	7.0p (8.4p)	4.5p
Highway Motors (F)	110.31m (4.78m)	-718.000 (-443.000)	-4.8p (-1.4p)	-
Home Counties News (F)	18.85m (18.78m)	1.7m (507.000)	11.46p (3.4p)	2.75p (2.5p)
New Group (F)	72.4m (63.92m)	1.38m (681.000)	2.46p (1.23p)	0.75p (0.5p)
Johnson & Smith (F)	46.79m (51.31m)	1.5m (0.16m)	4p (5.5p)	1.3p (1.3p)
JSB Securities (F)	10.714 (22.94m)	842.19p (-218.16p)	-	-
Lapin (F)	57.07m (57.54m)	1.54m (-2.48m)	1.6p (3.23p)	0.4p (0.3p)
Mecher Holdings (F)	58.11m (64.89m)	3.75m (-5.00m)	3.64p (-8.1p)	1.4p (1.27p)
Perpetua (F)	281.7m (208.7m)	32.8m (28.5m)	13.48p (11.9p)	3.30p (2.57p)
Pyralis Group (F)	-	4.58m (3.19m)	14.2p (10p)	4p
Scottish Media (F)	57.9m (52.2m)	16.5m (10.3m)	21.6p (11.5p)	8.6p (5.5p)
Shawcross (F)	7.7m (4.04m)	549.02p (359.81p)	3.3p (0.4p)	-
TT Group (F)	294.8m (266.8m)	27m (22.8m)	11.4p (9.5p)	3.22p (2.8p)
Vero Group (F)	50.31m (55.9m)	9.45m (7.42m)	8.0p (8.0p)	3.0p (2.0p)
Wilson Securities (F)	236.0m (147.3m)	29.1m (17.3m)	21.2p (12.3p)	3.3p (3.0p)
WSP Group (F)	20.52m (13.49m)	1.45m (1.02m)	3.3p (2.5p)	1.2p (1.2p)
Zetara (F)	4.29m (3.85m)	488.00m (275.000)	-	-

(F) - Fiscal (I) - Interim (M) - Nine months (Q) - Quarterly

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Making money on the Internet is not so easy



COMMENT

The proposed carve-up of CompuServe could be only the start of a larger shakeout and period of consolidation in a business which is generally failing to live up to early expectations

Even in an enterprise as hip, new and fashionable as the Internet, commercial reality has a nasty habit of coming home to roost. It is reckoned that by the turn of the Century, the Internet in all its various guises will have attracted some \$200bn of investment worldwide. The revenue earning powers of the Internet, however, will be lucky to have breached the \$50bn mark. What this means is that for the time being the worldwide web is more about hope and expectation than anything else, at least in commercial terms. All but the lucky few will continue to lose money on it into the indefinite future.

The proposed carve-up of CompuServe, then, could be only the start of a larger shakeout and period of consolidation in a business which is generally failing to live up to early expectations. This is not to belittle the power of the Internet to transform the world economy, by providing an alternative way of accessing the customer to a whole range of different industries, the Internet has already guaranteed its position in history. But it may all take a lot longer to happen than everyone first thought. Certainly the optimistic business plans on which many Internet projects are based are now being widely challenged by bankers and other sources of capital.

Unless you are Microsoft, with money to burn, it is not easy to raise funds for the Internet these days. One day we'll all buy our newspapers, do our shopping and conduct our banking via the Internet and there will be pots of money to be made out of it. But not yet.

Which is why, when push comes to shove, the regulatory authorities on both sides of the Atlantic will probably agree to American Online's acquisition of CompuServe's retail subscriber base. On the face of it, the move gives AOL an effective monopoly, both in the US and Europe. But actually it doesn't really do this. As Internet users become more sophisticated and technologically literate, the market for the packaged, hand-holding, introductory service provided by the likes of CompuServe and AOL may in any case be on the wane. Certainly that is what AOL would find if it attempted to push up prices in the wake of this acquisition.

If even CompuServe cannot make any money out of these markets, what hope for the legion of smaller, specialist services-provider hopefuls? It seems quite likely we will see some of these either going out of business entirely or being merged with other organisations over the year ahead.

The web's failure thus far to generate revenue in sufficient quantity to cover its costs is actually only one of the constraints on the Internet's growth and power to transform the world. The other never to be underestimated constraint is that of established centres of commercial wealth and power. To think that they are going to roll over and let their tummies be tickled by the new generation of Internet entrepreneurs is to underestimate the staying power of old wealth. These organisations will fight like alley cats to preserve their positions, and

they will attempt to stay the pace of change until they themselves have adjusted their costs and culture to harness its powers. As the experience of CompuServe shows, creating new centres of wealth and power out of the Internet may not be as easy as it looked.

Rail competition faces tough barriers

When Connex South Central can serve 350 rail services a week with complete impunity, then surely the day when the privatised train operators start to face competition for their passengers cannot arrive a moment too soon.

The Rail Regulator, John Swift QC, may be thinking this as he prepares to issue a consultation paper next week asking for views on how quickly the 25 train operating companies created through privatisation should start to lose their monopolies. When the previous government was faltering on the industry for sale the last thing it could afford was to allow competition on the same routes from day one, so each franchisee received a period of exclusivity.

However, all that is due to change in 1999 when open access, to use the dreadful reguless, arrives in a limited way. In theory, that will allow up to 20 per cent of rail services in each franchise area to be thrown open to competition with rival operators using the

same track to offer competing services.

As things stand, there is already a modest degree of competition on the railways – partly by dint of the way the franchise map was drawn up. Passengers have a choice of three services from central London to Gatwick, there are two competing services to Birmingham and there is even limited competition for passengers travelling to Scotland between InterCity West Coast and Great North Eastern.

In practice, the amount of extra competition produced by open access is likely to be small. If Connex South Central could not make a go of its new Metro service into the capital in an area not well served by the Tube and with £75m of subsidies a year, then who else is going to be tempted to have a go?

There will be some areas of the network where operators will be tempted to cherry-pick. Richard Branson's Virgin, which already operates the west coast line, may try its hand at running services up the east coast, for instance, not least because it will have a shiny new £750m fleet of tilting trains at its disposal.

But others will be less keen on competition. There are two barriers. One is practical – there are only so many trains that can use the same piece of track before disaster overtakes the network. The other is political. The new Government is more interested in promoting an integrated transport system answerable to passengers' needs than encouraging competition willy nilly. The last thing it wants is a repetition of the experi-

ence that befell the bus industry with predatory pricing and operators leapingfrogging one another's services in gain a competitive edge.

The simplest way to increase rail service levels on the operators. It was never satisfactory that they got away without even having to operate existing timetables when the franchises were let. Unfortunately, the only way to make this palatable would be either to extend the franchises or pump more subsidies into the network. All in all a tricky one for the rail regulator and his political overlord John Prescott.

Confusion on the Stock Exchange

Any investors hoping to fog their British Energy shares yesterday morning were likely to be sorely disappointed. In an extraordinary cock-up, trading had to be suspended for well over two hours as the Stock Exchange investigated why some market makers were still quoting partly paid share prices when the stock had gone fully paid. A storm in a teacup maybe, but nobody likes to see markets confused in this way, for however short a period. Given that ensuring an orderly market is one of the few responsibilities left on the shoulders of the Stock Exchange these days, it seems astonishing that its reminder of the transition had somehow not got through to market makers.

For years, customers have packed their groceries themselves. Now some stores are considering going full circle, reports Nigel Cope

Tesco prepares to reintroduce the delivery boy

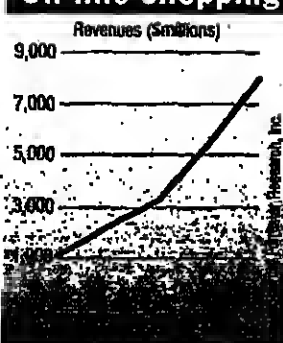
Tesco is set to announce an expansion of its home delivery operation in the next few weeks in a move which will bring the concept of electronic shopping and the virtual store one step closer.

Tesco Direct offers customers the choice of placing grocery orders via the telephone, fax, or through the Internet. The orders are then delivered to their homes for a charge of £5.

The service is already operating in five areas, including Oxford, West London, Leeds and Sutton, Surrey. It is thought that Tesco is finalising plans to develop the service further through the supermarket group yesterday declined to give further details ahead of its results next week.

Tesco's move is one of several home delivery initiatives being aggressively rolled out. Iceland last week announced plans to offer its home delivery service nationwide backed by a fleet of 850 vans. Burton, the fashion retailer, started selling its Evans brand via the Internet at the weekend. Its other formats, including Dorothy Perkins,

On-line shopping



Debenhams, Principles and Racing Green, will start trading electronically over the next two months.

Analysts are divided on the significance of these developments. Andersen Consulting estimates that up to 20 per cent of supermarket shopping could be conducted via non-store electronic channels by 2000. But Clive Vaughan of Verdict Research is more sceptical: "I think there is a genuine desire among retailers to check out these new channels. But I don't believe they will go mass mar-

ket without companies investing sizeable sums in them. Are they really going to do that and jeopardise their store portfolio? I think the idea is that they want to control it and keep what little business there is in their own hands."

Of the major supermarkets Tesco is already the most advanced in home delivery. It has been running Tesco Direct for nearly a year with an electronic store that offers 20,000 lines. Half of its customers order by phone and fax, with the remainder using the Internet site.

Sainsbury's is being more cautious but is also looking to extend its trials. It has been running an Order and Collect service in Watford and Solihull. Under this service customers place their orders via phone or fax but must come to the supermarket to collect the shopping. The charge is £2.

Sainsbury's also runs an off-site shopping service at Hewlett Packard which it is looking to extend later this year. Staff at the HP office in Bracknell order their groceries through the office computer. The goods are



Back to the future: Tesco is at the forefront of moves to reintroduce home delivery for groceries

Photograph: Hulton Getty

then delivered to the car park at specific times in the afternoon from the local branch of Sainsbury's in Calcutt.

Safeway has been running a service called Collect and Go in two stores since July. This is similar to Sainsbury's Call and Collect scheme though it only offers dry groceries, not chilled or frozen items. Steve Webb, Safeway's marketing director, says: "We are not wholly certain what customers want yet. We are seeing if there is sufficient

interest and the results have been encouraging so far."

The central conundrum for the supermarkets and other retailers is that if the electronic shopping home delivery does gain mass market acceptance, it will take customers out of the stores, leaving the retailers with a redundant store portfolio.

The initial costs are also very high for an uncertain reward. Iceland is investing £12m in its home delivery operation and admits it will not break even this

year. Given that Iceland is not charging for the service it is relying on a significant, and unspecified increase in sales volumes, to make the service pay for itself.

Even Tesco's £5 charge would not cover its costs, according to Verdict's Mr Vaughan. His view is that customers in lower blocks or in homes that are off the beaten track would be far more expensive to service.

Many retail analysts feel that the home delivery operations

being tested by retailers are more defensive than strategic. They feel retailers are protecting themselves against potential new entrants who may have lower cost bases.

It is a battle which the high street banks also face. With their expensive branch networks, the major clearers will struggle to compete with Internet banking operations which have lower costs than telephone-based providers such as First Direct.

For retailers it is ironic that

after decades of encouraging customers to do more of the work in the form of self-service, packing and even self-scanning, the market appears to be going full circle – back to the delivery boy.

Iceland's nationwide launch was criticised by many analysts who said it was too expensive to operate and too easily copied to be successful. But it would only take one of the big four supermarket operators to break ranks and the rest would follow.

IN BRIEF

Energis earns £30m of deals from BBC

Energis, the long-distance phone business in the process of being floated by its owner, National Grid, announced two deals worth around £30m to supply communications services to the BBC. They come on top of a landmark £100m, 10-year contract secured by Energis in 1995 to link up the BBC's radio and TV sites across the UK. The first of the new contracts will provide digital sound and picture links between the BBC's London base at Television Centre and regional headquarters in Cardiff, Glasgow and Belfast. The second deal will give journalists faster computer links to a digital newsgathering system. Mike Grabiner, Energis chief executive, said the 10-year contracts would strengthen the company's foothold in the broadcasting and media industries.

US bank buys London Global Securities

London Global Securities, the stock lending company, has been bought by Donaldson Lufkin & Jenrette, the Wall Street investment bank. Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed, although the price is understood to be around £50m. Michael Hiard, managing director, will continue to run London Global, which has a total staff of 45, including directors.

Traffic picks up in Eurotunnel

Eurotunnel said the encouraging increase in traffic achieved in July had continued in August, following the reopening of all shuttle services in June and earlier difficulties due to the tunnel repair works. Tourist traffic on Le Shuttle in August was up 25 per cent from July. The number of tourist vehicles including motor-cycles, cars, trailers, caravans and campervans on Le Shuttle in August this year was 284,437 compared with 304,032 in August 1996. The company said 6,150 coaches travelled on Le Shuttle in August, compared with 6,301 a year earlier. On Le Shuttle Freight, 30,858 lorries travelled in August 1997, down from 46,045 in August 1996. Eurostar carried 681,663 passengers in August, compared with 566,247 passengers a year earlier.

Forth Ports expects improved results

Full-year results at Forth Ports were expected to move ahead on the back of additional business generated at its London Tilbury terminal, the Scottish ports group said as it reported a 8 per cent increase in profit before tax to £11m on turnover up 9 per cent to £44.8m for the six months to 30 June. A company spokesman said: "The major new facilities at Tilbury, which are now commencing, are beginning to generate additional business. The increase in Tilbury container activity and the expected further increase in steel pipe traffic at Leith should result in an improved performance in the second half of the year."

Johnston Press sells bookbinding division

Johnston Press has disposed of its bookbinding division to a 31 Group-backed management buyout. The business comprises Riley Dunn & Wilson Limited with its binderies in Falkirk and Huddersfield, Cedric Chivers Limited in Bristol, Dunn & Wilson (Ireland) and Dunn & Wilson (Australia).

British Energy suspended over price confusion

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Trading in British Energy shares was halted for more than two hours yesterday as confusion surrounded whether dealers should quote the price including the second privatisation instalment. In what the Stock Exchange said was a very rare event, the nuclear generator's shares were suspended at 8.44am and did not reappear on dealing screens until after 11am.

Separately yesterday it emerged that the company did not expect to find a new chief executive until the end of this year to fill the post left after the surprise resignation in June of Robert Hawley. The departure came after the board told Mr Hawley he would not succeed John Robb as chairman when his contract expired in 1999.

The company said it had not

found a candidate for the job and, until searches proved successful, Mr Robb would act as executive chairman.

The trading glitch yesterday came when some market-makers, who match buyers with sellers, were apparently unaware that the company's share price had to be quoted as fully paid from yesterday, including the second instalment of 98p a share.

The shares had opened more than 44 per cent higher than Friday's 208.5p close, at 301p, to reflect the fully paid price. British Energy shares were offered to investors at 203p in July 1996, in a controversial privatisation which raised £1.4bn for the Treasury. Small shareholders were given a 5p discount, with the cash payable in two instalments, the first of 100p, with the balance of 98p due on 16 September.

The Stock Exchange said it



John Robb: stepping in until chief executive post is filled

had told dealers of the impending change in July, with a follow-up announcement on its new share price.

The share price had to be quoted as fully paid from yesterday because for technical reasons investors who sold their shares before 16 September would still need to pay the second instalment. Until last Friday

shareholders could sell the stock and pass responsibility for the second payment to the buyer.

The Stock Exchange spokesman insisted nobody was in blame for the confusion and added that only seven trades had apparently been made before the suspension.

British Energy said the mess was "obviously to do with administration at the Stock Exchange". The shares closed at 309p, equivalent to a rise of 25p on a like-for-like basis.

France to sell 20% of Telecom

Chris Godsmark

The French government yesterday reactivated the sale of a stake in France Telecom, the huge state-owned phone company, in a move which could raise more than £19.9bn (£24.4bn) and would cement closer ties with the group's partner, Deutsche Telekom.

The sell-off was originally planned for June by the previous conservative administration but was abandoned, along

with other planned privatisations, by the new socialist government under the Prime Minister, Lionel Jospin.

Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the Finance Minister, said yesterday that the government intended to sell around 20 per cent of France Telecom to private and institutional investors.

He said ministers also wanted Deutsche Telekom to own a further 7.5 per cent stake in the company after the sale. France Telecom would buy a similar

sized stake in the German carrier. The two phone groups already collaborate in the Global One alliance with Sprint, the US long-distance operator.

In addition, France Telecom's employees would own around 3 per cent, bringing the total stake released by the government to more than 30 per cent. Mr Strauss-Kahn insisted the sale was not the same as a privatisation. "This is an opening of the capital. Privatisation means selling more than 50 per cent."

The syndicate of banks and brokers created under the previous plans, which could have seen up to 49 per cent of France Telecom sold, was still in place in the hope that the sale would ultimately receive the go-ahead.

Analysts said the government needed to raise funds to help reduce its borrowings. On Friday it was confirmed that Air France will not be privatised, prompting Christian Blanc, the airline's chairman, to hand in his resignation.

50

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market report / shares

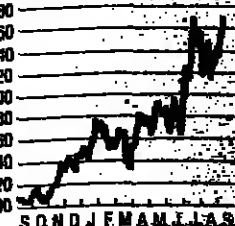
Data Bank

FTSE 100	4985.2	-9.0
FTSE 250	4686.1	+5.1
FTSE 350	2401.3	-3.0
SEAQ VOLUME	465m shares,	
	39,999 bargains	
Gifts Index	97.46	+0.21

Share spotlight

share price, pence

ScottishPower



Property provides the focus as Footsie drifts

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

stock market reporter of the year

Property dominated a lacklustre stock market. Footsie drifted aimlessly in this trading and if there had not been an outbreak of speculation in the property industry the market would have been in danger of doing so completely.

The debate surrounding MEPC, the nation's third largest property group, was one of the main features.

The breakdown of merger talks with Burford and the subsequent £247 cash bid for the PSIT property group nudged MEPC 7p higher to 476.5p.

MEPC's proposed deal with Burford was seen as a much needed opportunity to inject new management into the stumbling group. Nigel Wray, Burford's chairman, and Nick Lesau, chief executive, were expected to take top jobs in the enlarged group.

But the talks foundered over how management roles should

be split. MEPC went off to buy PSIT and Burford retired to lick its wounds. Its shares fell a further 8p to 108p. They were 121p before the talks were called off.

Some are unhappy that Burford, which has an entrepreneurial image, was prepared to be subsumed into what would have been a £4bn property giant.

Hammerson, off 8.5p at 442.5p, lurks in the background. It too had unsuccessful talks with MEPC and some think it may be tempted to return with a hostile offer.

British Land, little changed at 595.5p, is another considered to be a possible bidder. British Aerospace, P&O and Great Universal Stores were indirect beneficiaries of the outbreak of interest in the property industry. Talk that it might float its Arlington property division lifted BAE, expected to produce sharply

higher interim profits on Thursday, 31p to 1,567.5p, a record. An Arlington deal could accompany the figures, expected to be up £100m at £295m.

P&O, 13p higher at 650.5p, was drawn into the debate following reports that it planned to unveil details of its Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. (RCL) building offshoot's decision next week, and Great Universal Stores, still anticipating the arrival of American Rose Marie Bravo at its Burrenby division, got further support from comments about its sprawling property portfolio. With speculation that Burrenby might be floated, the shares led the blue chip leader

board with a 20.5p gain to 663p.

Footsie ended 9 points off at 4,985.2 with volume well below the market's perceived break-even level. Second and third-liners enjoyed a little more support than their peers.

ScottishPower celebrated a firm American debut with a 7.5p flicker to 469p. Brewer Bess fell to 857.5p on stories that SBC Wertheim had downgraded the securities house denied any change of stance.

There was utter confusion early on in British Energy, with the shares quoted with and without its second call. After a short suspension trading resumed including the 99p call.

Closing price was 308.5p, in effect up 2p.

Standard Chartered fell 11p to 797.5p despite Merrill Lynch support but Kolls-Royce, after recent weakness, rose 2p to 230p.

Manoeuvring ahead of tomorrow's Footsie changes saw possible casualties rally. Mercury Asset Management rose 23p to 1,269p, and Hanson 5.5p to 317p, Sun Life & Provincial, a possible candidate in December if its £690m Equity & Law takeover goes through, was little changed at 403p.

Chiroscience, ahead of a US presentation, rose 14p to 297.5p and Thackeray, involved in merger talks with Tracker Network, advanced 17.5p to 396p; Tracker spurred 65p to 610p.

Estate agent Savills firmed. 2.5p to 130p. First Pacific of Hong Kong said it would splash out £17m buying shares at 160p for a 20 per cent stake.

John Tams, a potter, gained 12p to 55.5p on a bid approach and Northstar, a property tiddler, rose 6.5p to 45p after disclosing that major stakes may change hands.

Helicon, a reference publisher, rose 2p to 92.5p after signing a deal to supply online copy for BT's educational network.

Profit warnings lowered textile group John Haggas 10p to 70p and Vero, an electrical group, 10.5p to 89p.

Bloomsbury International held at 1,147.5p. Interim figures have been brought forward to today. A small loss is expected. There are hopes that the group will at last produce details of its signalled alliance with US drug giant Johnson & Johnson. Negotiations have dragged on. They involve the bio-coating for stents, used to keep arteries open. There is talk of other links with the US giant which already has a Bin stake.

MEPC gained 2.5p to 476.5p, highest for 10 years, as it clinched a deal with the German Siemens Nixdorf group to provide specialist software for the petrol industry. The Germans have a contract from the Exxon giant to install computer systems at Esso service stations.

BTG, the development group, rose 19p to a 787.5p peak as analysts inspected its revolutionary Torotrak gearbox. Last week Shell produced a range of oils for Torotrak.

UK Estates, which fended off a £21m bid from Ashbury, is expected to buy in 2.5 million shares at up to 29p tomorrow. The company, which recently sold its flagship St Anne's House, Manchester, is likely to make a substantial property purchase soon. Its shares are 25p.

Alcoholic Beverages

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Adnoca	40.0	-0.5	100	100
Adnoca	40.0	-0.5	100	100

Banks, Merchant

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Barclays	200.0	-1.0	100	100
Barclays	200.0	-1.0	100	100

Banks, Retail

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
HSBC	100.0	-0.5	100	100
HSBC	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Breweries, Pubs & Rest

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Beck's	50.0	-0.5	100	100
Beck's	50.0	-0.5	100	100

Building Construction

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Arrol-Johnston	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Arrol-Johnston	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Chemicals

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Alkermes	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Alkermes	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Diversified Industrials

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo American	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo American	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Electronics

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Amstrad	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Amstrad	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Engineering

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Alstom	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Alstom	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Food Manufacturers

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Government Securities

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Index-linked

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Medicines

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Longs

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Shorts

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Undated

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Gas Distribution

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Health Care

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Household Goods

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Insurance

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Internationals

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Leisure & Hotels

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Pharmaceuticals

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Printing & Paper

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Property

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Retailers, Food

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Retailers, General

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Support Services

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Telecommunications

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Textiles & Apparel

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Tobacco

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Transport

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Water

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Share Price Data

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

The Independent Index

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

UK Stock Market Report

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

UK Company News

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Foreign Exchange

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Oil Exploration

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Oil Integrated

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Other Financial

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Retailers, General

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Support Services

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Telecommunications

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Textiles & Apparel

Stock	Price	Chg	Vol	Index
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100
Anglo Sweets	100.0	-0.5	100	100

Tobacco

[illegible]

sport

Floundering flagship sets new course

Dave Hadfield charts the changes rugby league must make to survive

There has been an uncharacteristic outbreak of thinking ahead in the official echelons of the rugby league. A body addicted to the quick fix and the knee-jerk panic measure sat down and considered where it wants to be in several years' time. A meeting of the Rugby League Council last week not only reformed the governance of the game, it also opened up a much-needed debate on the direction - or lack of it - of its flagship Super League.

This was not entirely a voluntary change of attitude. It sprang from the game's paymasters at News Corporation pointing out that what they bought with their £87m is simply not being delivered.

That money was committed on the basis that the Rugby League would use it to create a national, indeed international, competition. The international aspect is still just about intact, with Paris surviving another season. But the national profile that the game was supposed to achieve under its new financial arrangements is as far away as ever.

If the sport is to have any hope of renewing its contract with Rupert Murdoch at the end of its first five-year term in 2000, it had better be seen to be at least making an effort.

Thus it was that the representatives of the existing professional clubs voted for a new franchising system under which some of them could lose their Super League places to sides set up in five designated areas: Glasgow, Dublin, the North-East, the Midlands and Wales and the South-west.

It is, as the game has proved in the past, a long way from

pious declarations of good intent to actually doing anything. But this is the clearest recognition so far of the need to change tack if Super League is to survive. Clubs are notoriously reluctant to give up their slice of the cake, but they finally seem to realise that, without a radically different mind-set, there could be no cake at all.

At the end of next season, existing clubs will have to re-apply for their places, not just in Super League but in the divisions below. They will have to show that they deserve to be there and they will have no automatic right to preferment over new franchises.

As the league's chief executive, Maurice Lindsay, bloodied from the clipping of his wings but, ironically, seeing some of his pet theories gaining credence, told the meeting, that present Super League clubs have had a two-year start and, if they cannot make a convincing case, they do not deserve to be included.

So what will Super League look like at the end of the millennium? The odds are now in favour of it incorporating a Glasgow team, playing at Partick Thistle, part-funded by the city council and possibly with a major input from the Australian club, the Hunter Mariners.

The other named areas have less definite prospects. There have been at least two approaches from prospective backers in Dublin, but in Wales and the North-east the odds have lengthened over the last year.

The existing South Wales club in Cardiff was allowed to die of neglect and, in Newcastle, Sir John Hall was fobbed off long enough for him to lose interest. The up-side is that in both



Before the fire faded: Super League sparks into life at Paris St Germain's Charité stadium in March, 1996

Photograph: Simon Wilkinson

places there is energetic grassroots work going on. There is something, however unpretentious, for a Super League club to base itself around.

The other prospect is for a second club in London. When Peter Deakin, the League's marketing expert, switched codes and joined Saracens, he

hinted that there could soon be a league team playing at Vicarage Road alongside the rugby union and football teams.

There is an element of self-justification in these nudges and winks and, yes, he would say that, wouldn't he? But the advantages of a second team in the South-east are legion -

and Watford is conveniently outside the M25, within which the new highly-successful London Broncos will argue that they have sole rights.

The best guess for the year 2000 is for a Super League of 14 teams, including Glasgow and maybe two of the others that have been mooted, followed by

another professional division, including several sides who have tried Super League and cannot stand the heat, and one that would be strictly part-time.

That would be a structure that makes far more sense than the current one, but it will not happen by magic. It requires the rift with the amateurs from Baria fi-

nally to be healed, something that seems easier to them now than Lindsay's power is diluted.

It needs serious ground-work to be done in the cities where we hope to capture a new audience. There is a working model for this. Although it has become convenient for Super League to decay the Australian Rugby League's expansion policy, it was the way that the ARL took club and representative games all over the country that established the base from which it could become truly national.

In Britain, with a maximum of hundreds rather than thousands of miles involved, a couple of clubs - Sheffield in Cardiff and St Helens in Liverpool - have gone out into new areas.

Bradford have expressed a willingness to take a match to Glasgow next season. While they are in the mood, all clubs should be told now that they will have to mount an equivalent missionary trip. Then, perhaps, the expansion on which the very existence of Super League depends will start to become a reality.

Goodway calls for 'reserve' Test team

Andy Goodway, the new Great Britain coach, who will today reveal his first selections for the forthcoming Test series against Australia, has called for the introduction of a national B team.

Goodway and his technical coach Shaun McRae are to name players for their squad once their clubs are knocked out of the end-of-season Premiership.

The training party will be trimmed down after the Premiership final later this month in a manageable squad for the first Test at Wembley on 1

November, but Goodway would like the discarded players to remain in the international set-up.

"In the past, players have been brought in and then simply discarded," Goodway, the former Great Britain forward, said.

"I would like to see the formation of a B team or a Young Lions - call it what you will - so that we can give them all a taste of international rugby. We could play France and, if we could get Australia and the Kiwis to do the same, we could arrange some meaningful fixtures."

Goodway and McRae will make their first choices from the clubs whose season is brought to an end by elimination from the Premiership, although Goodway will not be able to select from his own Paris club because they comprise Australian and French players.

Leeds and Oldham completed the preliminary round at Headingley last night.

Goodway, meanwhile, will hold talks with the French Federation later this week about the future of the Paris St Germain club, who were involved in a

battle to avoid bottom split in Super League for the second successive season.

Although Sir Rodney Walker, the Rugby League chairman, has told Paris that had they finished bottom, they would not have been relegated, Goodway is anxious the club is put on a more secure footing.

Canberra Raiders defeated Penrith 32-12 in the Australian Super League semi-finals, but paid a high price in injuries. Second-rower David Furner suffered knee ligament damage and could be out for six weeks.

PHILIPS



THE INDEPENDENT
INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

LEAGUE TABLE

CALCULATED ON MATCHES PLAYED FROM 8 AUGUST - 8 SEPTEMBER

POS	NAME	TEAM	POINTS
1	MR A MITCHELL	THE EYE FOR IT	269
1	MR MIKE EWINS	I'VE STARTED BUT WILL I FINISH	269
1	MR MIKE EWINS	MIKES C TEAM	269
1	MR MIKE EWINS	MIKES A TEAM	269
2	MR MIKE MITCHELL	OVER THE MOON BRIAN	268
3	MR MIKE EWINS	MIKES D TEAM	267
3	MR CHRIS KING	SEEKING VICTORY	267
3	MR PHIL TUFLE	PIN UPS 4	267
3	MR DAVID EVANS	OUZING END OLD BLUES	267
3	MR JOHN COX	SOUTHVILLE FC	267
4	MR MIKE EWINS	MIKES E TEAM	266
4	MR IAN BOLLE	WEMBLEY BUNDLERS	265
4	MR A WINGROVE	TONY'S BRACE	265
4	MR TOM LYONS	DAN'S DEMONS	265
5	MR CHRIS SUNKER	BERKAM UNITED	263
5	MR STUART SCOTT	THE DREAM TEAM	263
5	MR S SRAI	THE UNTOUCHABLES	263
5	MR MIKE EWINS	MIKES F TEAM	262
5	MR IVON P BICKNELL	FLASH IN THE PAN	262
5	MR DAVID ASTON	BILLY BOYS 2ND 11	262
7	MR ABDUL CHOUH	NICKIES 9TH 11	261
7	MR A MITCHELL	NURSERY PK ROVERS	261
7	MR DAVID BAKER	XPS RULES	261
8	MR IAN DOWN	THE RUFFUS	260
8	MR IVON P BICKNELL	MAMBO MAMBO	260
8	MR DAVID ASTON	BILLY BOYS 3RD 11	260
9	MR MIKE EWINS	MIKES G TEAM	258
10	MR B SRAI	SIMPLY THE BEST	257
10	MR MIKE MITCHELL	ENDURING IMAGE	257
10	MR G WHITEHEAD	THE GREEN TEAM	257
11	MR DAVID BAKER	DEJA VU	256
12	MR MICHAEL RICHARD	ALLER LAMBERG	255
12	MR DAVID EDMINGTON	EDMO UNITED	255
13	MR PETER CRIDLAND	PDC2	253
13	MR ROLAND DUNN	12 ANGRY MEN	253
13	MR JONATHAN FURNES	RED STAR SILVER	253
14	MR DAVID BAKER	DEAD BEAT	252
14	MR T PARKER	A SUMMER TIME BREEZE	251
15	MR DAVID BAKER	DEAD HEAT	251
16	MS JENNIFER MOORE	JEN'S JUMPING GIANTS	250

The new season is well underway and today we are giving you the opportunity to assess your team's potential with the first set of team scores. Also today, we publish the league table for the first month of the season.

Congratulations to the Mr A Mitchell of London who is our first monthly winner and has won a pair of tickets to see England play Moldova at Wembley tomorrow night.

Every time one of your players scores you get four points. There are four points for a keeper or a defender every time their team keeps a clean sheet. If a player scores the winning goal, i.e. if there is a one goal difference in the scoreline, the player scoring the final goal for the winning team is awarded 1 bonus point awarded in addition to standard goal related points. Each successful Assist, a pass judged by our experts to lead directly to a goal, will give a player 3 points. The opinion of our ex-

perts on the matter is final. Each player selected and starting a game will be awarded one point.

If a player is given a Yellow Card they lose 1 point. If a player is given a Red Card they lose 3 points. Own goals, either scored or conceded, do not count.

The Premiership Manager that you choose will be awarded 3 points if their real-life team wins, 1 point is awarded if they draw and no points are given if they lose.

HOW TO SCORE	
player scores	4 points
clean sheet	4 points
winning goal	1 point
successful assist	3 points
Yellow Card	-1 point
Red Card	-3 points
manager's team wins	3 points
draw	1 point
loss	0 points

INDEPENDENT FANTASY FOOTBALL

OVERALL SCORE CALCULATED ON MATCHES PLAYED FROM 8 AUGUST - 8 SEPTEMBER

POS	NAME	TEAM	POINTS
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Let's make things better

PHILIPS

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BHB steps up the hunt for owners

One of the more memorable moments in the relatively short history of racehorse ownership by racing clubs with hundreds of members came at Cheltenham in the early 1990s. Mace, owned by the White Horse Racing Club, had just won a Grade One hurdle race at the epicentre of National Hunt, and dozens upon dozens of the very ordinary people who each owned a tiny share of him burst into the winners' enclosure in rapturous celebration.

To one side, a racecourse official in a bowler hat studied the scene in silent but undisguised horror. Good God, you could see him thinking. The heathens have scaled the walls. First the Empire, now this.

If the gentleman in question

has not yet retired to Bournemouth or Worthing, the latest initiative from the British Horseracing Board's ownership marketing group is unlikely to improve his mood. "Tips To Build A Dream Own" is a 20-minute video, produced at a cost of £25,000, which aims to explain the costs and rewards of owning horses to anyone who likes the idea but has always been afraid to ask.

One tape will be sent free of charge to every owner and bloodstock agent in the country, with more copies available from the BHB at £5 each, while a two-minute taster with a catchy sound-track will be played on closed-circuit television at racecourses throughout Britain.

Greg Wood on the latest attempt to lure more people in pursuit of a dream

The video is arguably worth £5 just for the brief clip of Ian Balding, whose normal manner is somewhere between laid-back and asleep, going berserk.

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Wood Venture
(Leicester 4.15)
NB: Forty Love
(Lingfield 3.30)

as one of his horses gets up on the line, but with a serious interest in ownership will also find much to consider.

There is no getting away from the fact that owning your

own horse is likely to cost between £12,000 and £15,000 each year – and this is money which should be seen as for entertainment, not investment – but syndicates have now opened up a route into ownership for those with rather less disposable income.

The claim in the film by Richard Phillips, a trainer, that it is now "affordable to literally every person in Britain with a job" is as laughable as one of Phillips' famous racing impersonations. For a group of perhaps 20 people with reasonable incomes, though, a meaningful experience of ownership is

more achievable than they might think, while the promotional opportunities of corporate ownership are succinctly set out by Mark Johnston.

For Jim Furlong, chairman of the BHB's ownership marketing group, the video is a strategic response to the frequent question by trainers, "what is the BHB doing for me?" The task of attracting owners to the sport is never-ending, with between 15 and 30 per cent of all owners giving up the pursuit of their personal dream each year, while many trainers are worryingly dependent either on one or two owners, or a collection whose fortunes are tied to such imperiousables as the movement of the stock market.

"It is a very tough job to be a racehorse trainer," Furlong says. "You have to spend a great deal of time on marketing to keep your customer base intact, and we will do anything we can to help them do that."

Forthcoming projects include, for the really serious would-be owner, a two-day seminar at Newmarket on 29 and 30 September to coincide with the Houghton meeting, which will include stable visits and a trip to the sales, at a cost of £225 (+VAT) per person, which is refundable in full to anyone who becomes involved in ownership within 12 months.

Those who still need a little more persuading can order their video on 01753 897 211.

Sands of time running for new race track

Momentum is growing behind the campaign to establish a new racecourse on the Welsh coast at Pembrey. It would rival Yarmouth as Britain's busiest seaside track with summer holiday features as its mainstay, writes Chris Corrigan.

The Pembrey site is close to a beach with seven miles of backing dunes overlooking Carmarthen Bay. A short distance to the west are Pendeine Sands, where 51 years ago a land speed record was set.

The race is on for the proposed track to be developed in time for the year 2000. This depends largely on discussions today by members of the British Horseracing Board, who will be considering an application for

the new course to stage 20 fixtures in three years time.

South Wales businessman Mel Davies, a long-standing owner and sponsor, and Jack Bennett, former manager of Worcester racecourse, are behind the plan. Together they have invested £20,000 on the preparation of a feasibility study that claims widespread enthusiasm for what would become Britain's 60th racecourse.

But their plans cannot progress unless racing's governing bodies agree to provide the necessary fixtures. "Our case is unquestionable," Davies argues. "Wales has the highest incidence of betting shops outside London, but only two courses. Bangor primarily serves Eng-

land, while Chepstow is closer to Bristol than Cardiff."

"The Welsh public is being disenfranchised while the interests we must get what we want. But I have my doubts. I suspect some people are lobbying against us. If we fail, they will want to know why. We may lose the battle on Tuesday, but we will win the war."

Sirrell Griffiths, who saddled Norton's Coin to win the 1990 Gold Cup at Cheltenham at 100-1, trains his small string at nearby Nantgarw.

"We would adore a course on our own doorstep. There are large numbers of racing people in this part of Wales and I don't see why people weren't travelling to a new track here."

membership may favour the established tracks.

"If the BHB ignores vested interests we will get what we want. But I have my doubts. I suspect some people are lobbying against us. If we fail, they will want to know why. We may lose the battle on Tuesday, but we will win the war."

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"We would adore a course on our own doorstep. There are large numbers of racing people in this part of Wales and I don't see why people weren't travelling to a new track here."

Dettori closes gap

Frankie Dettori began a week in which he goes in pursuit of a third successive St Leger with a success at Bath that takes him within two wins of his title rival Kieren Fallon.

Dettori, who had been banned for five days, scored on Tuesday, while Fallon drew a blank from four rides. The scoresheet for the turf-season title now reads 132-130.

Dettori, who has won the last two St Leger on Classic Cliche and Shantou, rides Stowaway in Saturday's final Classic. Six horses were withdrawn at yesterday's declaration stage, leaving 13 to go to post for the £210,000 race.

Godolphin plan to run Nattara as well as Stowaway, while Sheikh Mohammed also has

King Sound and Crown Of Light in the race.

Mick Channon will saddle his first St Leger runner, Poseidon, who has not run since he finished second to Stowaway in the Gordon Stakes at Goodwood in July. "I have been thrilled with him since and he is in great form," Channon said. "The million-dollar question is whether he is good enough and whether he will stay."

Arlington International in Chicago, home of the Arlington Million and one of the premier tracks in the US, faces an uncertain future after withdrawing its application for 1998 fixtures. Economic factors, including competition from riverboat gambling, have been blamed.

LEICESTER

2.15 Bluewin Lady
2.45 Fanti Dancer
3.15 ALFAHAL (nap)
3.45 London Lights

GOING: Good in Firm (Good in places). STALLS: Inside for all races. DRAW ADVANTAGE: Low to middle numbers may be best for 5f to 1m.

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RACING'S FUTURES MARKET

Portland Handicap (5f 140yds)

Horse (Trainer)	Dist	Weight	Time	Place
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	5f 140yds	10-1	28.4	1st
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	5f 140yds	10-1	28.4	2nd
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	5f 140yds	10-1	28.4	3rd
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	5f 140yds	10-1	28.4	4th
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	5f 140yds	10-1	28.4	5th
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	5f 140yds	10-1	28.4	6th
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	5f 140yds	10-1	28.4	7th
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	5f 140yds	10-1	28.4	8th
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	5f 140yds	10-1	28.4	9th
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	5f 140yds	10-1	28.4	10th

St Leger Stakes (1m 6f 132yds)

Horse (Trainer)	Dist	Weight	Time	Place
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 6f 132yds	10-1	28.4	1st
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 6f 132yds	10-1	28.4	2nd
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 6f 132yds	10-1	28.4	3rd
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 6f 132yds	10-1	28.4	4th
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Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 6f 132yds	10-1	28.4	6th
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 6f 132yds	10-1	28.4	7th
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Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 6f 132yds	10-1	28.4	9th
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 6f 132yds	10-1	28.4	10th

Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe (1m 4f)

Horse (Trainer)	Dist	Weight	Time	Place
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 4f	10-1	28.4	1st
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 4f	10-1	28.4	2nd
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 4f	10-1	28.4	3rd
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 4f	10-1	28.4	4th
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 4f	10-1	28.4	5th
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 4f	10-1	28.4	6th
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 4f	10-1	28.4	7th
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 4f	10-1	28.4	8th
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 4f	10-1	28.4	9th
Alford (Mr J. W. H. Jones)	1m 4f	10-1	28.4	10th

Each-way a quarter the odds, places, 1, 2, 3 (Longchamps, Sunday, 5 October)

RACING RESULTS

BATH

2.00: 1. AUNG DANCE (1) (Mr J. W. H. Jones) 11-1, 1st. 2. AUNG DANCE (1) (Mr J. W. H. Jones) 11-1, 2nd. 3. AUNG DANCE (1) (Mr J. W. H. Jones) 11-1, 3rd. 4. AUNG DANCE (1) (Mr J. W. H. Jones) 11-1, 4th. 5. AUNG DANCE (1) (Mr J. W. H. Jones) 11-1, 5th. 6. AUNG DANCE (1) (Mr J. W. H. Jones) 11-1, 6th. 7. AUNG DANCE (1) (Mr J. W. H. Jones) 11-1, 7th. 8. AUNG DANCE (1) (Mr J. W. H. Jones) 11-1, 8th. 9. AUNG DANCE (1) (Mr J. W. H. Jones) 11-1, 9th. 10. AUNG DANCE (1) (Mr J. W. H. Jones) 11-1, 10th.

LEICESTER

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LINGFIELD

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Scotland poised to reap rewards

Football
PHIL SHAW

Scottish football scarcely had time to savour the national side's 4-1 defeat of Belarus before the focus of the proposed breakthrough by Premier Division clubs. Come tomorrow night, however, the focus will switch from the future of the Motherwells and Montrose to events in a faraway former Soviet republic.

Belarus against Austria at the Dynamo Stadium in Minsk will be monitored as eagerly as if it were taking place at Ibrox or Tannadice. Scotland need a substantial favour from the team they trounced at Aberdeen if they are to avoid the purgatory of play-offs for a place in the World Cup finals.

Austria's bruising victory over Sweden has made them favourites to win Group Four. Provided they beat Belarus home and away, Herbert Prohaska's team will qualify automatically for France.

Belarus' record is not calculated to encourage optimism among the Scots, whose more realistic target is either to advance as the runners-up with the best record or to win the two-leg play-off which is the very least that three points against Latvia in Edinburgh next month would guarantee.

Gary McAllister, whose penalty settled Scotland's visit to Minsk in June, said: "It's a difficult place to get a result and the pitch isn't conducive to good football. Belarus will have key players back from suspension and the Austrians will have Anton Pfeffer and Michael Konsel banned [both were sent off on Saturday], which must affect them."

The Belarus coach, Mikhail Vergeyenko, also offered hope to his opposite number, Craig Brown. "I saw Scotland play Austria in April and I liked the Scottish team more. We hope we can play better at home and help you."

After all the uncertainty and acrimony surrounding Sunday's fixture, Brown had done his usual meticulous job in preparing the players. He also showed a masterful touch in his use of substitutes, one of whom, David Hopkin, made a startling impact after replacing McAllister.

If Scotland's display did not quite merit the praise heaped on it by a press which sees everything in extremes, there could be no mistaking the balance their manager had produced.

First there was poise. Notwithstanding the presence of McAllister and John Collins, this quality was most evident in the contribution of Paul Lam-

bert. The Dortmund midfielder has allied precision and vision to his customary industry. Wim Jansen, who had hoped to buy him for Celtic, must wonder how he was ever allowed to elude the club he supports.

Second, less surprisingly, came passion. The two goals from Kevin Gallacher, who recently expressed an admiration for Ally McCoist's knack of being able to score even when off form, were the just reward for an afternoon of lung-busting effort.

As if to underline his point about McCoist, Rangers' talismanic striker set up Scotland's second with a mis-hit shot from an offside position. Hopkin bundled the ball in, and further demonstrated his value with a stunning late individual goal.

With his gummy grin, framed by fangs, Hopkin evoked memories of Joe Jordan, who also listed Morton and Leeds on his CV. Jordan's penchant for important goals was largely responsible for the fact that many Scots now expect to share in the four-yearly global jamboree as of right.

If, on this occasion, qualification comes down to goal difference - the first criterion before goals scored and results between the two teams - Hopkin's inspired intervention may prove equally significant.



Paddy Muir, riding Archie Brown, clears a fence during yesterday's triumph at Blenheim

Photograph: Allsport

Rivals hand title to Muir

Equestrianism
GENEVIÈVE MURPHY
reports from Blenheim

Paddy Muir gained the greatest triumph of his career yesterday, when he progressed from third overnight to win the three-star Blenheim Vauxhall Monterey International Horse Trials on his home-bred grey gelding, Archie Brown.

Having jumped one of only seven clear rounds in yesterday's final show jumping, the 34-year-old Muir watched her two remaining rivals hand her the top prize. Bruce Davidson, the former dual world champion from the United States, took a small break out of the second round with Heyday, before Mary King had three errors on the all too predictable King William, with whom she had held the overnight lead.

Show jumping has always been William's Achilles' heel. Yesterday, as he cleared the first nine of the 13 fences, there were hopes that he might yet surprise us. But, having dislodged a rail from the 10th fence, it seemed inevitable that more mistakes would follow.

"It unsettles him when he has one down, he then loses confidence," King said. She was nevertheless delighted to finish third, one place below Davidson, who was a lot kicking around at home. She has already evented seven or eight of them and there seems to be an unlimited supply of youngsters waiting to be introduced to the sport.

Her winning mount, Archie Brown, has jumped clear three times around the four-star course at Badminton - but the 13-year-old will not be returning to the big event in Gloucestershire. "He finds the distance a bit of a struggle, so he'll do three-star events from now on," Muir said.

Davidson, on the other hand, is on the four-star trail. He is delighted that his own country will be introducing an event of this status in Kentucky next April - to add to the long-established British contests at Badminton and Burghley, which are the only other four-star events on the calendar.

"The whole world is delighted about Kentucky and I hope they all back it," Davidson said. "It has a super course and as nice a site as you could find anywhere." The course is designed by Mike Etherington-Smith, who is also responsible for the cross-country fences here.

BLAISEN Vauxhall MONTEIRY INTERNATIONAL HORSE TRIALS: Paddy Muir, 34, on Archie Brown, cleared the 10th fence. Muir's victory was a triumph for the home-bred grey gelding, Archie Brown, who has jumped clear three times around the four-star course at Badminton - but the 13-year-old will not be returning to the big event in Gloucestershire. "He finds the distance a bit of a struggle, so he'll do three-star events from now on," Muir said.

Record haul credited to Lottery lift

Rowing

Britain's head coach yesterday handed the credit for the country's best ever world championships to the National Lottery. "Two years ago Britain claimed just two medals - one gold and one silver. That record was comprehensively broken in

Aiguebelette, France, last weekend as eight medals were won in a variety of disciplines.

Head coach Jürgen Grobeier was in no doubt as to the principle source of Britain's medal haul: "I think it is obvious what has caused the success," he said. "Last year we only got two medals in Atlanta and since the Lottery grant (£1.8m) we have

moved that up to eight. I think that money has been the main cause of the success."

"The team have trained really hard for this and they have been able to do it without the pressure of trying to find the money. They used to spend half of the time they could be training working, just to pay for the flight. Now they've got this money they can con-

centrate on their training and that means that success comes."

Double sculls silver medalist Guin Batten had intended to quit after Atlanta if funding was not available but the grant persuaded her to stay. "When the Lottery came along everything was sorted out for us and all of a sudden it made winning a possibility rather than a dream," she said.

Coaches to meet referees again

Rugby Union
CHRIS HEWITT

England's leading coaches will stage yet another clear-the-air meeting with senior referees over the next few days in an effort to end the rampant confusion over scrum and tackle rules. Many international players are concerned at what they believe to be an inconsistent approach by Allied Dunbar Premiership and Heineken Cup officials and are pressing for immediate action.

Yesterday, the urgency of the situation was reiterated by Kim Doherty, the chief executive of the English Rugby Partnership, the body charged with administering the top end of the domestic club game. "If the actual participants can't get the rules straight, it's difficult to see how the spectators can hope to understand what they are watching," he said. "We do not have a satisfactory situation at the moment, but a meeting is imminent and we all hope it will clarify matters."

Richard Hill, the Gloucester coach, described the last meeting of minds between coaches and referees as Bisham Abbey as "a shambles" while Lawrence Dallaglio, the Wasps captain, has repeatedly voiced fears that the rules applied in England are different to those in force in the southern hemisphere. "We could get penalised to high heaven when we play New Zealand, South Africa and Australia," he said at the weekend.

In Sydney, Wallaby officials plan to name their new national coach later this week. Rod Macqueen of Australian Capital Territory and John Connolly of Queensland have the field to themselves after Cardiff's Alec Evans decided not to run.

Christophe Deylaud, the French international outside-half, is out for a month after injuring his knee during the Toulouse-Leinster game in Dublin on Saturday while Philippe Saint-André, a former French captain, twanged a thigh muscle while playing for Gloucester against Padova.

Italy look to Five Nations

Dean Richards believes Italy are close to earning an invitation to compete in the Five Nations championship.

The former England player was impressed by Milan, who forced his Leicester side to battle harder than expected for their 26-10 win in the opening round of the Heineken Cup.

In the two previous meetings between the sides in 1992 and 1993, the Tigers won comfortably by 40-24 and 53-7, but the Italians' vast improvement since those games nearly brought them victory at Welford Road.

Richards was quick to back the Italians' claim for a place in the northern hemisphere's premier competition. "The way they are playing at the moment, they could soon be in the Five Nations," he said.

"They have to sustain this level of skill and commitment for a while yet and provided they do that I don't see why they can't be included. They've certainly picked up a lot from where they were five or six years ago."

"Their ball-handling skills, vision and the way they think about the game is far better than it ever has been. The way they used to play was perhaps two years behind us. It's all about ourselves and the southern hemisphere, but Italy are now coming on strong and playing very well."

England turn to two Dyers and a Murphy

The Liverpool midfielder Danny Murphy and the Ipswich wing-back Kieron Dyer have been awarded their first England Under-21 caps for tonight's European Under-21 Championship qualifier with Moldova at Wycombe.

Murphy is set to play behind the only orthodox striker in the side, Crystal Palace's Bruce Dyer. The 18-year-old Kieron Dyer will be expected to get forward down the right flank and supply the ammunition for his namesake, who was recalled to the squad because of injuries to two strikers, James Scowcroft and Darren Eadie.

Aston Villa's Riccardo Scimacchi will captain the side for the second time in the absence of the injured Ben Thatcher and will be part of a three-man defence also containing Chelsea's fit-again Michael Duberry and Coventry's Marcus Hall.

ENGLAND UNDER-21: In midfield, Gareth Southgate (Reading), Kieron Dyer (Ipswich), James Scowcroft (Aston Villa), Michael Duberry (Coventry), Bruce Dyer (Crystal Palace), Darren Eadie (Aston Villa), Kieron Dyer (Ipswich), Riccardo Scimacchi (Aston Villa), Ben Thatcher (Aston Villa), Ben Thatcher (Aston Villa).

Reggae Boys given a boost by Burton

World Cup round-up
RUPERT METCALF

The Derby County striker Deon Burton scored the goal which gave Jamaica a 1-0 win over Canada on Sunday - and an unexpected glimpse of next year's World Cup finals.

One of a number of English-based players recruited by Jamaica this summer, Burton cracked a 55th-minute volley past Craig Forrest, the West Ham goalkeeper, to give the home side maximum points in their World Cup Concacaf zone final round qualifier in Kingston.

With three teams qualifying for France from a six-team group, Mexico lead the way with 11 points from five matches. The United States are second with nine from six and Costa Rica are third with eight from seven.

Jamaica lie fourth, behind Costa Rica on goal difference having played a game fewer. If the "Reggae Boys", as Jamaica are known, can beat Costa Rica

in Kingston on Sunday, they will be well placed to qualify for the finals for the first time ahead of the more-fancied Costa Ricans, El Salvador and Canada.

A crowd of 35,000 packed Jamaica's National Arena for the match, with hundreds locked out. As well as Burton, the home side picked Wimbledon's Robbie Earle, and Paul Hall and Fitzroy Simpson of Portsmouth. Canada fielded West Bromwich Albion's Paul Peschisolidi and Plymouth's Carlo Corazzini as well as Forrest.

The United States improved their chances of another appearance at the finals with a 1-0 win over Costa Rica in Portland, Oregon. Lab Ramos grabbing a 78th-minute winner which was set up by the former Everton midfielder, Predrag Radosavljevic. "We're well on our way to France" now, said Steve Sampson, the American coach, who picked the Leicester goalkeeper Casey Keller and Roy Wegerle, the former Queen's Park Rangers forward.

'Italians' important job

England may be planning to ambush them on the final straight, but first Italy have to find a way past Georgia on the last bend of their World Cup race.

Italy must win against the skilful Georgians in Tbilisi tomorrow, or face the prospect of England, and not the 1994 World Cup finalists, qualifying automatically for France 98. Cesare Maldini is even toying with the idea of a three-man attack, based on Roberto Baggio playing behind two strikers. In his quest to ensure a clear-cut victory in the Georgian capital.

Italy's need for goals is based on the arithmetic of their World Cup campaign, which has become complicated after a 0-0 draw in Poland.

They are still top of Group Two in the European zone, but they are only one point ahead of England.

With England likely to get three points from Moldova tomorrow, a failure to win in Georgia would install Glenn Hoddle's men as the group leaders before the decider in Rome on 11 October.

Despite the need for goals, Italy's 65-year-old coach is unlikely to try anything rash on the tactical front. Maldini will almost certainly start with his tried and tested 4-4-2 line-up, coupling the creative skills of Chelsea's Gianfranco Zola with Lazio's powerful central forward, Pierluigi Casiraghi.

Zola's team-mate Roberto Di Matteo and Parma's Dino Baggio are likely to harness the

central midfield, with the Juventus pair Antonio Conte and Angelo Di Livio out on the flanks. Fabio Cannavaro and Ciro Ferrara should return to central defence, with the captain Paolo Maldini on the left. Christian Panucci on the right and Angelo Peruzzi between the posts.

Italy won 7-0 in a practice game against an amateur side at the weekend, and Maldini said: "The game gave me a few indications, but nothing to make me change my mind completely. Roberto Baggio showed some nice touches, and using him behind two strikers remains an alternative."

Bulgaria will become the third European nation to qualify for the finals if they beat Russia in Sofia tomorrow.

Smith enters top hundred

Tennis

Sam Smith, the 25-year-old British No 1 from Essex, gave British tennis a further boost following Greg Rusedzki's exploits at the US Open when she was ranked No 100 on the WTA computer yesterday.

It is a new landmark for Smith, whose highest previous ranking was 103 in September 1991. Smith then gave up full-time tennis to spend three years

at university before returning to the international circuit. Her latest ranking is due to winning three matches in the US Open qualifying competition and then beating Australia's Nicole Pratt in the first round proper before losing to Conchita Martinez.

Smith was ranked 114 before the US Open, but the 14 places she has climbed should give her better chances of being accepted directly for further tournaments in the immediate future.

Michaelson maintains lead

Cycling

Germany's Marcel Wüst spoiled Italian Fabrizio Guidi's bid for the overall lead on the third day of the Tour of Spain yesterday, matching his second victory in many days. He beat Guidi and Germany's Sven Teutenberg in a mass sprint after 173.3km of racing from Loebe in Portugal. Denmark's Lars Michaelson retained the yellow jersey of

leader by one second from Guidi after the Italian, 10 seconds behind the Dane overnight, gained 11 seconds in time deductions for his second placing and victory in one of the day's three intermediate sprints.

Michaelson, however, earned a deduction of two seconds in that sprint to stay on top after Guidi's last chance to oust him was lost when Wüst took the victory bonus of 12 seconds.

American football

NFL: Atlanta 6 Carolina 9; Baltimore 28 Cincinnati 10; Chicago 24 Minnesota 27; Detroit 17 Kansas City 16; Los Angeles 6 New England 31; Miami 15 Tennessee 13; New Orleans 8 San Diego 20; New York Jets 20 Seattle 28; Pittsburgh 14 Washington 13; St Louis 12 San Francisco 15; Indianapolis 40 NY Giants 13; Philadelphia 10 Green Bay 6; Seattle 14 Denver 30; Arizona 28 Dallas 22.

AMERICAN LEAGUE: Boston 11 Milwaukee 2; Detroit 6 Anaheim 3 (15 innings); Texas 4 Tampa 0; NY Yankees 10 Baltimore 3; Kansas City 4 Oakland 9; Minnesota 3 Seattle 6; Cleveland 5 Chicago White Sox 2.

BASEBALL: American League: Boston 11 Milwaukee 2; Detroit 6 Anaheim 3 (15 innings); Texas 4 Tampa 0; NY Yankees 10 Baltimore 3; Kansas City 4 Oakland 9; Minnesota 3 Seattle 6; Cleveland 5 Chicago White Sox 2.

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SPORTING DIGEST

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Survival instinct
Dave Hadfield on the changes
needed in rugby league, page 22

sport

Hitting the heights
John Roberts on a fine fortnight for
Greg Rusedski, page 24

Old Firm lead top 10 breakaway

Football
DAVID MCKINNEY

A new future for Scottish football will be unveiled today by the 10 clubs who make up the Premier Division. All 10, led by the "big two" north of the border — Celtic and Rangers — have tendered their resignation to the Scottish Football League with effect from the end of the season in the hope that an elite division similar to that in England can be established.

The breakaway by Celtic, Rangers, Hibernian, Dunfermline, Motherwell, Heart of Midlothian, St Johnstone,

Dundee United, Aberdeen and Kilmarnock will be discussed by the Scottish League management committee on 18 September, although there is little it can do to halt the change coming about. At best, it can delay the inevitable by a season because any unauthorised departure would leave the players' registrations in the hands of the league.

The moves will be construed in some quarters as prising ajar the door which leads towards amalgamation of clubs in Scotland and England into a British league. That possibility was not discounted by Lex Gold, the Hibernian chairman, who is a spokesman for the Premier clubs.

"That has not been part of our deliberations because our focus has been on improving the game in Scotland," he said, "although as a flexible minded person I would suggest everything is possible. The move will be in the interests of the whole of Scottish football and not just the top clubs."

There was no comment from the Scottish League beyond confirmation from the secretary, Peter Donald, that he had received 10 letters of resignation.

Jim Parry, the chief executive of the Scottish Football Association, said: "There has been no formal contact with the SFA about this matter by our clubs."

The proposed league will not be exclusive to the current 10 Premier clubs and promotion and relegation will continue. Scotland's top clubs have been talking of breaking away from the league for at least five years. Back in 1992, the proposal looked like going through, only for Celtic to pull out at the 11th hour and tear the whole idea apart.

The debate came to the surface again in May of this year. That is when the 10 clubs, headed by the Rangers chairman David Murray and the Celtic managing director Fergus McCann, said they wanted a Premiership style set-up which

would involve a new link with Sky TV. Accountants were asked to come up with a business plan for the £37.5m, five-year deal.

The Glasgow giants have over the years become increasingly frustrated at seeing their power eroded by smaller clubs and feel change was vital. But this season opened with the same system in place and the same frustrations.

However, all that looks about to change with Murray and McCann still at the forefront of the negotiations. Sky's TV deal, currently worth £10.4m runs out next May.

There is little doubt an autonomous, elite league would derive financial benefits. While the English Premiership has dramatically increased the revenue from television, clubs in Scotland have received as little as £100,000 from TV shares while playing in the top division.

An important aspect to any change will be the ability of the bigger clubs to make use of huge screens in order to beam away matches into their home grounds. Rangers recently were blocked from such moves by the league who insisted on a £25,000 payout for every match shown at Ibrox to be distributed to the other clubs.

was sounded by Rick Parry, who helped fashion the breakaway from the Football League by the then English First Division clubs in 1992.

"Simply forming a new league doesn't mean you get millions from TV or generate more sponsorship straight away," he said. "It depends on market forces and whether there is a demand for the product. A change like this doesn't automatically improve the basic quality of the product."

"You can't wave a magic wand and suddenly everything is put right. You don't get untold riches thrown at you because you have become different."

Defender Pedersen signs for Rovers

MARK BURTON

Tore Pedersen hopes that his £500,000 move to Blackburn where he signed a three-year contract yesterday, will help him to earn a ticket to France for the World Cup finals.

In that respect the Norwegian central defender has an advantage over his team-mates at Ewood Park, because Norway are sure of their place in the finals. Pedersen's problem was his previous side, St Pauli, were relegated from the top flight of the German Bundesliga, putting his international career in jeopardy.

Pedersen, who has more than 40 caps, missed the 1994 final with a cruciate ligament injury while on loan at Oldham. "I have come here because of my World Cup place. I was happy at St Pauli but when they were relegated I wanted to leave. I need to play at the top level," he said.

Newcastle United have taken two foreign players on trial. The club's assistant manager Terry McDermott, said they were looking at Bernard Allen, a French Under-21 midfielder, and a Spaniard, Alejandro Sierra Fumero.

Stroud and are hoping to sign Mark Hughes from Chelsea and David Hirst from Sheffield Wednesday to compensate for the loss of Niall Quinn, their Republic of Ireland international striker. Quinn may need a third knee operation in 12 months. He missed most of last season's Premiership campaign after damaging cruciate knee ligaments for the second time. He required further surgery at the end of the season, but the problem has flared up again.

Matthew Le Tissier is hoping to be over his broken arm in time to meet Liverpool on 20 September. He broke a bone in the tip of his elbow during a pre-season friendly in Germany and required an operation. He was initially ruled out for three months.

Robbie Fowler and Oyvind Leonhardsen, neither of whom have played so far this season, will play for Liverpool reserves this week, in the hope of being fit for next week's UEFA Cup match against Celtic.

Bolton have sent Mark Fish back to South Africa to train with his former club, Orlando Pirates. The £2m centre-half, signed from Roma, is still waiting on a work permit and has to leave the country until it arrives.

Tottenham's Neale Fenn has been promoted to the Republic of Ireland's World Cup squad for tomorrow's match against Lithuania, despite being sent off for the Under-21 side against Iceland four days ago.

More football, page 25

Seaman 'suits the occasion'

GLENN MOORE

David Seaman has more Wimbledon memories than most: he conceded a 40-yard free-kick to Paul Gascoigne in the FA Cup semi-final; he won and lost Euro 96 penalty shoot-outs; he has even watched Rod Stewart play there in the pouring rain. Tomorrow, however, he will represent his country on a bitersweet night more laden with emotion than even the twin towers could recall.

Seaman was yesterday chosen by Glenn Hoddle to captain England in tomorrow's World Cup tie against Moldova. He has been granted the honour, despite Hoddle's admitted dislike of goalkeeper-captains, because the England coach feels that he has the character to handle a singular occasion and the status to grace it.

"He suits the occasion," Hoddle said. "He has the respect of players and public alike, is as experienced as anyone in the squad and at the top of his game. He is a smashing lad, always looking on the positive but always in control of his emotions. No one knows what the evening will be like but I'm sure he will be able to deal with it."

Seaman received the MBE during the summer and Hoddle added: "That honour goes with the situation. There is a job to be done. Many people will have gone back to work today, we have to do that on Wednesday."

Seaman, who has previously

led Arsenal and Queen's Park Rangers, is Hoddle's fifth captain — Alan Shearer, Tony Adams and Stuart Pearce are injured and Paul Ince suspended. He said: "The worst time will be up to the kick-off. We will all be thinking of Diana but after the national anthem I think the players' mood will change because we have a job to do. We will show our respects before that."

Seaman feels a particular empathy with the tragedy, as his fiancée's mother died less than a month ago. "It has been a bad month and an emotional time," he admitted. He and his girlfriend laid flowers at Kensington Palace and signed the condolence book at Harrods on Friday evening.

"You could see what it meant to everybody," he said. "There was a load of nationalities there, not just English, all laying flowers. It was strange, a lot of people recognised me but no one bothered me for an autograph. Normally people do but they were there to pay their respects to Diana. I noticed it straight away."

The England squad are donating their match fees to the Memorial Fund. They, the FA and other authorities are still discussing whether, and when, "Candle in the Wind" should be played. Elton John had been approached with a view to performing his tribute but will be in New York. A decision will be made on the night after assessing the mood. "There is a danger that it could become a wake," admitted David Davies,

the FA's Director of Public Affairs. There will be other gestures with the team likely to wear a black ribbon, as Greg Rusedski did in the US tennis Open, rather than an armband. Les Ferdinand said most of the

team had watched the funeral at their homes. "No one could have played on Saturday but now we have to concentrate on the job in hand," he added. "I think people are over it now and getting on with their lives, but it was very emotional watching

it. It's such a pity it took a tragedy like that to bring the nation together. I hope we can give everybody a lift."

England should manage that although, as Hoddle noted, an early goal would probably do a lot to lift the mood and ease the

tension on the night. Seaman is likely to find himself a remote captain, with much of the play at the other end. This would not normally be ideal but Hoddle's choice is justified in the unique circumstances. Gary Pallister, somewhat



David Batty (left) trains under the watchful eye of the new England captain, David Seaman, at Bisham Abbey yesterday. Photograph: Peter Jay

FA's domestic blueprint

GUY HODGSON

The Football Association, fearful of an English Premiership wholly dominated by foreign coaches and players, has taken steps to encourage domestic players to become coaches.

Jimmy Armfield, the FA's technical consultant, is to work with the Professional Footballers' Association to ensure that high-profile players follow the likes of Glenn Hoddle, Kenny Dalglish and Bryan Robson by staying in the game after they retire from the field.

"This is not an anti-foreigner thing," Armfield, who will be in charge of the FA's six regional coaches, said yesterday. "To say there should be no foreigners here would be nonsense and if young goalkeepers watch Peter Schmeichel or forwards learn what Gianfranco Zola does I'd be more than happy."

"But we need to ensure that the expertise of players like Dalglish and Robson are not

lost when they stop playing. The FA coaches and myself will be going to clubs and talking to players. Today's professionals are where the coaches of the future will be."

Armfield, who played for England 43 times in the 1950s and 60s and who managed Leeds United to the European Cup final in 1975, said that clubs were looking to short-term solutions of signing foreign players, rather than spending money developing their own players. Better coaching, he believes, will bring better players and reduce the need for imports.

Currently, there are more than 130 foreign players employed in the Premiership while two clubs, Arsenal and Chelsea, are managed by non-British coaches. Those figures do not take into account the large number of Scottish, Welsh and Irish footballers who are also ineligible for selection by England.

At Chelsea, for example, a team made up entirely of foreigners is feasible, yet the move-

ment in the opposite direction is negligible. Daniele Di Nino, who moved from Queen's Park Rangers to Sampdoria in the summer, is the only English player in Italy's Serie A, while there are none in the top divisions in Spain and Germany.

"I went to a Premiership match last season where there were only seven players eligible to play for England," Armfield said. "That cannot be good for the domestic game."

"Arsenal looked abroad for a coach, as did Celtic, and Blackburn also went to Italy, even if Roy Hodgson is English. There is going to be more of that in the future and we have to be ready to meet that challenge. If it was any other business they would already have done it."

"I feel very strongly that the development of our young players should be a priority for the Government and the Football Association. In the past I've felt this has been left to somebody else, as if it takes care of itself, but it doesn't."

Rider sacked after drug test

CATHERINE RILEY

The Australian 500cc rider Anthony Gobert has been dismissed by his Suzuki team for failing a drug test at last month's British Grand Prix.

The test was carried out on behalf of Team Lucky Strike Suzuki at Donington Park on 17 August and is believed to be the first positive doping case in the 500cc world championship.

Suzuki did not say what Gobert tested positive for and a spokeswoman declined to name the substance. She would not say whether it was a recreational or performance-enhancing drug.

"Team Lucky Strike Suzuki terminated its contract with Anthony Gobert following a positive drug test," said a Suzuki statement issued from Japan.

"Results made available to the team last week showed a positive reading for a prohibited substance. As a result, in the best interests of the team, the sport and fellow competitors, his contract was terminated with immediate effect."

There was no word on any replacement for Gobert in the three remaining races of the season and Suzuki are also expected to lose his team-mate, Darryl Beattie, next season when he returns to superbike racing.

Gobert, 22, was in his world championship debut season in the 500cc category, yet he thrived on controversy, clashing with the four-times world champion Michael Doohan before the season started, when he reportedly branded his competitor a loser.

His best result of the season was seventh place in Austria, but he had scored points consistently and was 13th overall in the standings.

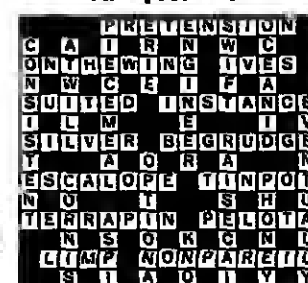
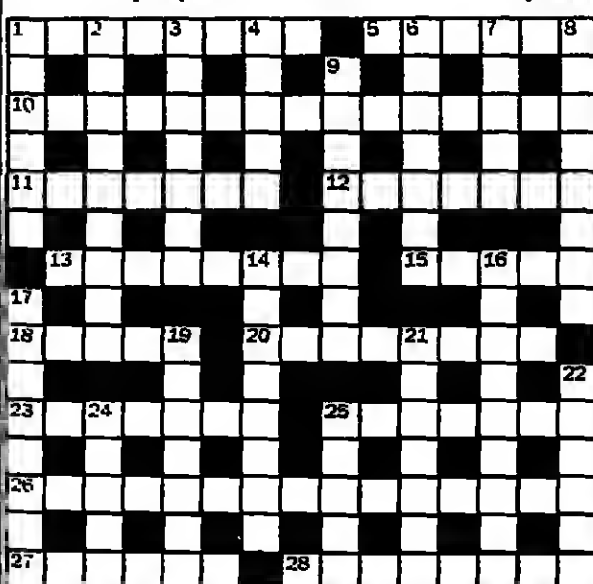
Gobert did not finish the British Grand Prix, retiring after just five laps and complaining of cramp in a hand. He had arrived at Donington late and lacking sleep, having missed his plane from Australia.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3399 Tuesday 9 September

By Alfred

Monday's Solution



- ACROSS**
- Chained up at a farm (8)
 - Element in Renault, say, good to the French (6)
 - Play Dorothy after expecting to have a turn (7,3,5)
 - Love to be cautious about Information Technology (7)
 - Greek consumer is of more significance (7)
 - Line taken by essayist's character? (8)
 - Draws an expression of disappointment (5)
 - Movement's right and supported by party (5)
 - Curve back a shot getting a reprimand (8)
 - Cold? Negative (3-4)
 - About to tuck into excellent frozen dessert? (4-3)
 - Resort to unlimited space to get four to holdy go? (5, 10)
 - Sharp bar put in place (6)
 - Opportunist who secures the green light? (2-6)
 - DOWN**
 - In truth a wicked Borders town (6)
 - Maybe it's Dresden where you could have a dim sum? (9)
 - Made an object of worship after initial reverse and built up (7)
 - Follow heartless chap in small Rover? (5)
 - A girl's upset about English poet (7)
 - Piece of French plumming? (5)
 - It's barely a matter of principle? (8)
 - One might be distressed not to have it? (4,4)
 - But said to be the opposite of dinner on one's knee? (3,5)
 - Religious person about to include French wine in list (9)
 - Man in the ocean here? (5,3)
 - Person's taking up favourite dance (3-4)
 - Wait to hold one company up? It's a killer (7)
 - Covering space in back? (4)
 - The French involved in prohibition of farm machinery (5)
 - Feature old material (5)

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Third drive

John Litchfield

Henri Paul, who drove in which Diana died, was back in the car when he was killed. He was driving the car when it was hit by a lorry.

A source close to the investigation has said that the car was not in the best of health when it was driven by Paul. The source said that the car was "not in the best of health" when it was driven by Paul.

Hungry

Jason Bonetto

If you want to take away the pain of a bad cold, there's nothing like a hot drink. For the people who would rather drink than eat, there's nothing like a hot drink. For the people who would rather eat than drink, there's nothing like a hot drink.